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FAST FOOD WORKER SUFFERS SERIOUS CHEST INJURY IN ROW

Police arrest man over knife attack in chip shop

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STANDING TALL: Port Lympne's silver sensation - the gorilla that walks like a man. Search 'gorilla'

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Picture: BRIAN MARSH

EPIC SCOOTER TREK

Actress Jan Francis and MP Damian Green have lent their support to an intrepid group of scooter enthusiasts hoping embarking on an epic ride from John O' Groats to Lands End.

In June the South Kent Saints Scooter Club will mount their vintage Vespas and travel the length and breadth of the country to help raise money for Find a Voice, a charity that helps children who have difficulty with communication.

The 10-day trip in June hopes to raise £10,000 and raise the profile of the organisation.
• SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 2

By **ED HILL**

ed.hill@kosmedia.co.uk

A STABBING at an Ashford chip shop has led to one arrest after a member of staff suffered serious injuries.

The attack happened at the Cod Father chip shop in the Lower High Street late on Thursday night.

A man entered the restaurant at around 11.37pm and a fight broke out between him and a member of staff who was behind the counter.

During the argument the man reached over the counter and the man who had been serving customers sustained stab wounds to his chest.

Injuries

He was taken to the William Harvey Hospital, where his injuries were assessed as serious but not life threatening. He remained in hospital while he recovered.

The attacker then ran off. Police carried out a search of the area.

A 25-year-old local man was arrested just before 2am on Friday on suspicion of attempted murder. He was released on police bail.

Investigating officers say the offender and the injured man were known to each other.

Police are not linking the stabbing to the incident in Folkestone on Monday, January 27, when a young man from Afghanistan died after being stabbed in a group brawl.

Osman Shazad, a student at the K College,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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Picture: BRIAN MASH

MOD SCENE: Actress Jan Francis and MP Damian Green join the scooter riders to launch their charity trip

Riders' long scoot to give kids a voice

AN actress and an MP recreated a scene from the classic movie *Quadrophenia* on Friday.

Jan Francis and Damian Green mounted vintage Vespas to help the charity, Find a Voice.

In June, the South Kent Saints Scooter Club will travel the length and breadth of the country to help raise money for the charity which helps children who have difficulty with communication.

The 1,664-mile Long Scoot Down will travel from John O'Groats to Land's End, taking in the three highest mountains in the UK, and finally reaching Ashford.

The 10-day trip in June hopes to raise £10,000 and raise the profile of the organisation.

Richard Parsons, project manager for the trip, said: "We will be avoiding as many motorways as possible and will be travelling along 12 of the highest

By **ED HILL**

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mountain passes. Most of the machines are the classic two-stroke bikes and we will be averaging 42 mph."

About 14 riders have already signed up for the fundraiser. The organisers hope other scooter fans will join them around the country as they make their way along some spectacular roads. They will also be creating merchandise commemorating the journey to add to the funds.

Jan Francis and Damian Green are two Patrons of Find a Voice.

The *Just Good Friends* star said: "The charity is all about communication, and where would I be without that. I have seen them working with the children and it is amazing the leaps and bounds they achieve, helping them to escape that silent world."

The Ashford MP and Minister for Immigration donned a bomber jacket to help launch the appeal.

He said: "I first met the group when I got involved in one of the special schools in Ashford. The charity is excellent at finding imaginative ways to raise money. It's also very important that an Ashford-based charity is leading the way. The work they do transforms the lives of children and adults and we want to raise its profile nationally."

Some of the bikes undertaking the journey visited the Figjam tattoo parlour in Beaver Road to give the launch an authentic feel. As well as Vespas, a classic Lambretta will also be on the journey.

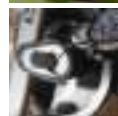
Mr Parsons said: "My father and I found one of these bikes when I was young and got it on the road. I know a lot of people love them because of the nostalgia involved in the film and the Mod scene, but I just love the machines themselves."

To find out more about the Long Scoot Down call Becky at Find A Voice on 01233 640443 or visit www.longscootdown.co.uk

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New rules won't restrict tenancies to local people

THE council will still allow people from outside Ashford to apply for council housing tenancies after new Government legislation.

As part of the Coalition Government's Localism Bill, it has decided to end lifelong tenancies for new tenants and give councils more flexibility over housing waiting lists.

Cllr Neil Bell, portfolio holder for housing said: "It is crucial to stress to existing tenants that their rights will be protected. If they have a secure tenancy, their rights will not be affected by these proposals."

The proposals have meant that some other local authorities have closed their housing waiting lists to people from outside their districts. But Ashford council says it already gives higher priority to local people.

Those applying from outside the borough receive 50 points less than

those with a local connection. The housing policy also reflects the needs of those with connections to villages.

The council says it works with both parish councils and housing associations to ensure new social housing delivers affordable accommodation for local people.

"It was important that in acknowledging the priority we rightly give local people, we do not do so to the exclusion of people from outside of the borough," said Cllr Bell.

He argued there were circumstances in which the council would accept housing applications from outside the borough.

He said: "There are times when we may have a property that is difficult to let and not wanted by someone locally. It makes no sense to leave such a property standing empty and losing money, although there have

been just two such incidents in the last year.

"We should also be compassionate enough to accept some people from outside of the borough in some circumstances, such as those fleeing domestic violence."

The council has broadly welcomed the Government's proposed changes to tenancies in the future, that could see them offered for a fixed term.

Cllr Bell said: "Fixed-term tenancies would enable the council to make better use of council housing."

"If a family was offered a tenancy for five years and their circumstances changed in that time, it would only be right to assess the situation to see if it was right to renew the tenancy. If an alternative was more appropriate at that time, we could then look to re-let that property to another family in need."



Going on the road to boost recycling

By **ED HILL**

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THE council is trying to improve Ashford's green credentials after it was named worst authority in the country for recycling.

It has organised a series of road shows to promote its blue box recycling scheme, in a bid to raise awareness of recycling among residents in the borough.

The campaign, which began on Saturday, coincides with the arrival of new boxes to more than 9,000 additional homes across the borough.

The new boxes, which can be used to recycle glass, paper, textiles and cans, alongside the usual refuse collection, are being delivered from the beginning of February.

New and existing box owners will also receive information on how to use the boxes and dates of collections.

The campaign has been made possible through a grant Ashford received from the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) and the Kent Waste Partnership (KWP).

With the support it has received, Ashford council aims to not only increase recycling rates but also move towards a greener way of thinking.

Last year Defra released figures showing that Ashford only recycled 15 per cent of its waste, the lowest figure in the country.

This compared to the best local authority which was Staffordshire Moorlands, which had a figure of 62 per cent. Recently the BBC's Daily politics show visited Ashford to get views



GREEN SCHEME: Blue recycling boxes have been distributed to another 9,000 homes in the borough in a bid to increase recycling

on recycling from local people. One resident admitted that she used her blue box to keep her dogs toys in.

However, some have argued that much of the waste that is recycled is exported to China, and how it is used is unknown.

The council hopes the new campaign will improve its record and change attitudes amongst local people.

Cllr Gerry Clarkson, portfolio holder for Environmental Services, said: "A greener approach is vital for the borough, not only environmentally but also economically. By saving

valuable resources we can save costs, but this can only be achieved if we all recycle as much as we can."

The road shows will be held at a variety of locations across the borough and will offer residents advice on Ashford's Blue Box scheme and also on general waste reduction.

The first road show will be held at the Designer Outlet on Thursday, February 3, with more at other venues around the rest of the borough through the month.

For details of the nearest road show to you, go to www.ashford.gov.uk/recycleforashford

Twelfth man arrested in farm death investigation

ANOTHER man from Ashford has been arrested in connection with the death of Sussex farmer Julian Gardner.

The 45-year-old was arrested by Sussex police on Wednesday, January 26.

The body of Mr Gardner, 53, was found at Bush Barn Farm, off the A21 north of Robertsbridge, on October 11.

Detectives investigating his death believe it happened after a burglary that went tragically wrong.

Mr Gardner, it is believed, disturbed an unknown number of people in the early hours of the morning breaking in to outbuildings where he ran an agricultural and car repair business.

Crushed

It is thought he was crushed by two cars during the incident that led to his death.

The man from Ashford is the 12th person to be arrested during the police inquiry; seven of them from the Ashford area.

The other 11 people arrested in connection with the investigation have all been released on bail, pending further enquiries.

These include a 39-year-old from Chilmington, a 31-year-old from Ashford and a 32-year-old from Cranbrook bailed until March 21.

A 31-year-old from Ashford, a 56-year-old from Sandhurst, a 22-year-old from Tunbridge Wells and a 29-year-old from Cranbrook have been bailed until March 22.

A 43-year-old from Maidstone, a 40-year-old from Ashford, a 37-year-old from Ashford and a 31-year-old from Ashford have been bailed until March 23.



Arrest after knife attack

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

died during an incident between gang members.

Two of the offenders involved in that incident were a 17-year-old from Ashford, who cannot be named, and Fazulmaq Walizada, 18, from Folkestone.

They appeared at Dover Magistrates Court on Saturday charged with murder.

South Kent Police are asking anyone who has information about the chip shop attack to call them 01622 690690.

Dog breeder wins appeal over ban

A WOMAN from Appledore has had a ban on keeping animals reduced at Maidstone Crown Court.

Melanie King, 57, from Station Road, was found guilty of six charges of causing unnecessary suffering to dogs in her care when she ran a dog-breeding business in Sittingbourne in February 2009.

She was originally given a life-long ban and a 140-day prison sentence, suspended for 12 months. She was also ordered to do 240 hours unpaid work and told to pay £250 costs.

King appealed against her conviction at Maidstone Crown Court on January 13. The lifelong ban was reduced to seven years, but she was ordered to pay an additional £100 towards costs.

One charge of failing to meet an animal's needs was dropped by the prosecution.

RSPCA inspectors who visited King's dog breeding business at Whents Farm in February 2009, discovered more than 70 dogs of various breeds, some with untreated medical conditions, living in squalid kennels.

RSPCA officers from Swale council and vets visited the property after a warrant was issued

and discovered that many of the dogs were living on soiled and damp bedding.

RSPCA inspector Ray Bailey said: "We are glad that Melanie King's ban on keeping animals has been upheld. Anyone buying a puppy should ask questions and make sure that they see the mother with the puppies in the place they were born, to avoid encouraging irresponsible breeders."

King was previously sentenced to a lifetime ban on breeding dogs after she admitted 24 offences under section 1 of the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973, following a case by Swale council.

She had been operating on a temporary breeding licence after concerns had been raised about conditions at her establishment. However she failed to deal with hygiene issues reported by council officers by the time the warrant was executed in February 2009.

A spokesman for the RSPCA said: "Melanie King would not have been able to keep any animals while the appeal process was going on, because she was disqualified. She was also banned from breeding dogs following a case brought by Swale council."

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Farmers do their bit to feed birds

FARMERS across the county have been helping birds get through one of the coldest winters in recent history.

It is part of a drive organised by the Campaign for the Farmed Environment.

The chairman of the campaign in Kent is arable farmer Doug Wanstall of Bank Farm, Aldington, near Ashford, who is among those providing wildlife habitats. He also puts out supplementary feed for birds, spreading grain on farm tracks.

Mr Wanstall said: "Kent's farmers have been helping birds through the cold snap with the provision of feeding areas – seed-rich plots, uncropped areas and overwintered stubble.

"Farmers have also been advised to ensure that hedgerow-cutting work is carried out as late as February, and finished before the nesting season in March. This maximises the berry crop available to birds such as song thrushes, redwings and fieldfares, which through our fields at this time of year."

Mr Wanstall is working closely with Kent Campaign for the Farmed Environment coordinator Frances Clayton, from Sevenoaks, who is advising farmers at grass-roots level on how they can support the campaign.

Many of the measures that farmers are putting in place can be managed and funded through an Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) agreement, while also contributing to the industry-led Campaign for the Farmed Environment.

By **ED HILL**

ed.hill@kosmedia.co.uk

Some who are not signed up to green farming schemes are doing environmental work voluntarily.

RSPB regional farm conservation adviser, Bruce Fowkes, said: "Farmers have been throwing farmland birds a real lifeline during the cold snaps that we have experienced this winter. Seed and berry-rich habitats are key to the survival of many birds during a big freeze.

The Campaign for the farmed Environment unites key industry bodies, including the NFU, Country Land and Business Association, Defra, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

It is also supported by the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust and the RSPB.

All the campaign partners are encouraging farmers to adopt, or continue, management practices that will help meet national targets between now and June 2012.

Mr Fowkes added: "Farmers can really help in giving winter food to birds by providing two hectare areas of wild bird seed mixes to every 100 hectares of arable land, or five hectares of over-wintered stubble. These measures can be put in under ELS agreements and commitments to the Campaign for the Farmed Environment. We have also asked farmers to consider spreading grain on farm tracks and next to hedges."

To find out more about the campaign go to www.cfeonline.org.uk.



LIFELINE: Sparrows are among the species that will benefit from the farmers' feeding campaign in the cold weather

Borough has highest rise in unemployment

ASHFORD has had one of the highest increases in unemployment at the end of last year according to the latest figures released by Kent County Council.

The numbers show 71 more people started to claim Job Seekers Allowance in the last quarter of 2010, a rise of 4.1 per cent; the county's highest percentage rise.

The figure was second only to Gravesham which had an increase of 81, a percentage rise of 3.7 per cent.

However, compared to the same time last year the figure is lower. There has been a drop of 155 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance since December last year; a reduction of eight per cent.

Compared with the rest of the county, Ashford's number of jobless is relatively low, at 1,782. The highest figure is in Thanet which has 4,074, and the lowest is Tunbridge Wells, with 1,023.

The figures released by the county council come from the Office of National Statistics. As seen across the rest of the country, the 18- to 24-year-olds form the largest percentage of the unemployed.

These figures only reflect the number of people on Job Seekers Allowance, they are not an accurate figure for the actual number of people not working.



The unemployment numbers are just one of several sets of statistics released by the Office of National Statistics at this time. Other figures covers the number of homeless in an area.

Between June and September last year Ashford had the highest number of households in Kent in temporary accommodation. The number was 99 - 20 per cent of the county's total.

But the figures show there has been a steady drop in the number of households in temporary accommodation since it height in 2007 when there were 167.

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ABTA Y0291

Just 25% of speed cameras are ready to take your picture

ONLY a quarter of the county's speed cameras are working, it has been revealed.

By **MARIJKE COX**

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Of Kent's 76 fixed safety cameras just one in four contains live film, with a massive 75 per cent just empty units put in place to deter speeding.

Nationally around 47 per cent are operational at any one time, but only 25 per cent are working in Kent.

In 2009, 30,911 speeding tickets were issued in the county, costing drivers a total of £2 million in fines.

A report commissioned by the RAC in November found that if all speed cameras were switched off nationally there would be 800 more people killed or seriously injured on UK roads.

The study by consumer watchdog Which? found three quarters of fixed cameras in Kent were duds.

Katherine Barrett, from the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership, said the report was correct.

"It is true that one in four cameras have live film in them at any one time but all the cameras are 'working' in that they are reducing casualties, which is their main objective," she

said. "All safety cameras have live film in them at some point; however, priority goes to those sites where casualties and/or offence levels are higher.

"If a camera does not contain film, it will have a dummy unit in it which flashes just above the speed limit as a deterrent and reminder to drivers."

Ms Barrett said there was no incentive to put live film in all the cameras as it would be too expensive.

"The camera being at the side of the road is often enough of a deterrent to stop people speeding," she said. "It is irrelevant how many tickets are issued – as long as casualties and speeds are reduced, that camera is doing its job.

"We are happy to publish the fact that 25 per cent of safety cameras in the county are live at any one time and cannot imagine that anyone would want to actually run the risk of seeing which ones are not."

Several county councils in the UK have scrapped speed cameras due to funding cuts from Government.

Kent County Council revealed last year it was reviewing the effectiveness of its speed cameras, although it denied there were immediate plans to scrap them.

An RAC spokesman said the organisation's own study suggested taking the cameras away would be a mistake.

"They save lives and demonstrate value for money and most people accept the need for them," he said.

But the Association of British Drivers said they wanted speed cameras scrapped altogether.

Kent spokesman Ian Taylor said: "We have always said that these cameras do not do a lot for road safety.

"Money needs to be spent on making driver training better."

Mr Taylor added: "The Association of British Drivers would like to see all speed cameras gone and more proactive work towards road safety."

A spokesman from Which? said people were probably unaware that some fixed speed cameras did not contain film.

He added: "The chances of being caught depend on where you drive."

Kent has 76 fixed safety cameras and 60 mobile camera van sites.



DUMMY: A quarter of cameras will flash but contain no film

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QUESTION & ANSWER

CHARLOTTE HARRIS



Q Tell us how you came to be in Folkestone.

A I moved to Folkestone in 2004 having lived in Leeds for four years during university. Mostly I moved back to Kent to be near my family, who come from Ashford. I looked for studio space all around Kent and came across the Creative Foundation, saw what was on offer and what was planned for the future in Folkestone and snapped up a space.

Q What first inspired you to become an artist?

A I had always been interested in drawing as a child, but I became much more focused on it when I reached secondary school. As part of art GCSE I studied lots of painters and experienced lots of "Wow! How did they do that?" moments, but was particularly taken by the Renaissance Artists and especially by Michaelangelo's Sistine Chapel. From then on when I looked at a work I admired I thought "I want to be able to paint like that".

Q How did it feel when you won the BP Portrait Award?

A Winning the BP Award was a shock. I had submitted the piece, a portrait of my grandmother, with the hope of getting it into the exhibition, but I never imagined winning. When I found out I was on the short list I was ecstatic; when I won, it was almost surreal, though obviously I was very happy!

Q Tell us about your latest work, Strawberries and Cream.

A Strawberries and Cream was painted within a series of pieces I had been working on, which depicts objects in a highly realistic, very focused way. I very much enjoy painting different surfaces and textures and describing them to the viewer, so that they get a real feel for the subject of the painting. In this painting the glass bowl, strawberry pips and squirry cream gave me plenty of challenges and a lot of fun.

Q What do you think makes for a great piece of art?

A I think there can be many reasons for a piece of art to be considered great. Some pieces are visually stunning and technically accomplished, others make you think and perhaps re-evaluate something.

Some works make a political or social point and can bring injustices or moral dilemmas to the public's attention. It also depends on the viewer's tastes.

A great work of art, like a great piece of music, should affect you on an emotional level either because of its content or its execution or a mixture of the two.

I think some of the best art works allow us to see ourselves and our environment in a new light. They show us something familiar that we can connect with and manage to cross the boundaries of age, culture or gender.

Q What do you think of the artistic and cultural life of Shepway?

A There are a lot of artistic projects being pursued in Shepway and many people are putting in much effort to support and encourage the arts. The Creative Foundation has initiated the Folkestone Triennial, bringing the artwork of well-known artists to Folkestone. Other organisations and businesses are working alongside to promote the arts. I hope that as time goes on, the town will reap the benefit of these projects.

Q Where can people find out more about you and what you're working on?

A People can see my work at www.charlotte-harris.com, where I also give details of any upcoming exhibitions. From the website you can also request an email newsletter, which will keep you up to date. I can be contacted at charlotte-harris@hotmail.co.uk

Q What do you like to do in your spare time when you're not working?

A I'm currently trying to learn to play the piano. I love sport and the outdoors and in the warmer months am a keen dinghy sailor.

Q Tell us something that people don't tend to know about you.

A I can make 1000 jumps on a pogo stick.

QA

The award-winning artist talks to **James Alexandre** about her decision to move to Folkestone, the benefits the Creative Foundation could bring to the town, and what makes a truly great piece of art

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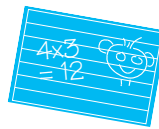
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BREAK TIME



Website revamp for the new term

THE Towers School has a new website design for online visitors.

The revamp was put in place to coincide with the new school term and was created by the school's own IT specialists.

It says: "With the onset of a new school term and with the new school logo we needed an up to date and more user-friendly website.

"After months of designing and discussion with our in-house designer a new layout was decided upon and created.

"With a new completely revamped design of the website created it was passed over to our in house team of website specialists so they could create an example site. After weeks of working with the designs a completed website was available to publish."

Hundreds line up for big sports hall athletics event

By **ED HILL**

ed.hill@kosmedia.co.uk

NEARLY 300 pupils from across Ashford, Maidstone and Swale took part in an exciting sports hall athletics event held at Maidstone Leisure Centre recently.

Eleven teams from the Mid Kent & Ashford School Sport Partnership competed against schools from Sheppey and Sittingbourne.

The schools were divided into heats, the first heat was contested by Minterne, Roseacre and Madginford Park Junior Schools plus St Teresa's and Sandling Primary Schools.

Minterne ran away with the large schools title winning all races on the track.

In the field events, Roseacre won the girls chest push event and finished second in the speed bounce. Roseacre's consistent performances on both the track and in the field ensured they finished second, winning the silver medals; as the top Ashford & Mid Kent School they qualify for the Kent Finals held in March.

In the second heat Egerton Primary School shared the gold medals with Regis Manor Primary School from Sittingbourne.

Egerton performed well across all events, winning the girls Soft Javelin event and a number of second places. Picking up the bronze medals were Hamstreet who pushed the top teams all the way.

In the third heat Greenfields performed well, establishing a clear lead ahead of John Wesley School in Singleton and Harrietsham.

Rob Wood, partnership development manager, said: "What a fantastic event to start 2011.



STUNNING BACKDROP: Pupils pass Leeds Castle in November's cross-country run in which Kennington Junior School boys won the Year Five and Year Six race

It was great to see so many schools and young people taking part. I wish Roseacre Junior School the best of luck at the County Finals."

The Mid Kent & Ashford School Sport Partnership is part of a national initiative involving every school in the country. The aim of the programme is to encourage all

schools to ensure every pupil is participating in two hours of PE every week.

In November, children from the Ashford and Mid Kent took part in a cross country run around Leeds Castle. Kennington Junior School boys were winners of the Year Five and Year Six race.

SEND your schools news and pictures to yourashford@kosmedia.co.uk. You can also upload your video clips of schools events on to www.yourkenttv.co.uk

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Phone users a danger to us all

If a relative or friend told you they had been updating their Facebook page while driving, you'd think they were mad – yet sadly, this kind of behaviour is becoming increasingly common.

Making phone calls, texting, logging on to the Internet and tweeting while driving aren't the only stupid things that drivers have been spotted doing. We've had members of the public contact us to say they've seen motorists trying to eat yoghurts, applying lipstick while doing 70mph, filming passengers using their mobiles, even shaving while talking on a mobile.

It's incredibly worrying that people still don't take seriously the dangers posed by using a phone while driving, or doing anything else which prevents them from concentrating on the road. Such irresponsible behaviour can be devastating: in the last three years, four people have died and nearly 60 have been injured, some of them seriously, on Kent's roads in mobile phone-related crashes.

Studies have proved that using a hand-held mobile phone while driv-

ing causes a distraction, impairs your control of the vehicle and reduces your ability to react to what is happening around you. Research has also shown you are far more likely to have a crash if you use your mobile while driving.

Unfortunately, there are still people out there who think that using a phone won't distract them, or that they will never get caught. That's why the Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership has launched a campaign to remind drivers that our safety camera vans will be out on the county's roads enforcing mobile phone and seat belt laws, as well as speed.

We want to remind people that it is illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone when driving and we hope motorists will take heed of this message. If you're still unsure about what's legal and what isn't, visit the partnership's website, www.kmscp.org.

We'd also like to hear readers' thoughts about reckless driver behaviour by encouraging them to write a letter to this newspaper. How do you feel about drivers using mobiles? In what circumstances have you seen drivers using them? What other crazy things have you seen drivers doing that could affect their concentration?

Perhaps by starting a debate on

this issue, motorists who continue to flout the law will finally get the message that every time they pick up that phone, they are putting lives at risk – including their own.

**Katherine Barrett, Communications Officer
Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership**

Sky Sports sacking Gray day for banter

Have the PC bigots never heard of banter – taking the mick out of each other is the way the English bond.

What makes it is even worse is that the woman concerned in the studio was not the one who complained, just some busy body.

I have more respect for women who retaliate to this sort of banter by using their own put downs. I have seen it enough times with my wife when we used to have a bar. She would often put men in their place if they spoke out of turn.

Everyone will soon have a list of things they can say and can't say. We will soon have a sterilised society but one thing is for sure. The next time a woman tells me I have 'man flu' when I am very ill – I will complain and sue them for being sexist.

As for the TV advert where two women who are suffering with colds but still struggling on, while complaining about their men folk

being at home in bed. Does that not infer men cannot cope when they have a cold? How sexist is that – It should be banned from TV.

These Women Libbers and PC Brigade want to get a life and come down to Planet Earth.

Martin Clarke

Make unemployed go back to work

I have no qualms about any foreign workers in this country; it just makes me so mad that more of our own unemployed are not forced to take these jobs as the Labour government said it would.

It's against human rights, I was told, to force anyone into work.

Excuse me, but what about the human rights of workers who are forced to supply the unemployed with their benefit money every week?

This money could be used to benefit people who deserve it, not those who are lazy and refuse to take any job they are offered.

As far as housing is concerned, the private sector is available for people on benefit to acquire housing.

But the majority of tenants prefer council housing as it doesn't have the stringent rules of the private sector.

Carole Russell

Cutting speed limit will reduce deaths

Kent Green Party has welcomed a new NHS report on road deaths and injuries which strongly recommends a 20 mph speed limit, without humps and bumps, on all residential roads.

Kent Green Party has petitioned in favour of 20 mph limits on residential roads throughout Kent over more than two years in Saturday visits to town centres from Ramsgate to Tonbridge.

Our petitioning found there was universal and overwhelming support for 20 mph limits in residential areas.

A lot of support for 20 mph limits outside schools is also evident whenever this was mentioned to the public.

The report presents compelling evidence that lives could have been saved and injuries could have been reduced if 20 mph limits had been introduced in residential areas.

Statistical modelling shows that up to 140 killed or seriously injured child casualties could be saved each year if 20 mph speed limits had been applied in these areas

**Steve Dawe
Kent Green Party**

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Standing tall – the gorilla who walks like us

AMBAM the Silverback gorilla is fast achieving great fame – because he walks on two legs like a man.

An 18-second piece of footage of him walking on his hind legs like a human has become a YouTube sensation.

More than 200,000 people have viewed the clip, and visitors to Port Lympne Wildlife Park have been fascinated as the 21-year-old male – who weighs 34 stone – strides through his enclosure.

The footage on the internet was filmed by animal researcher Johanna Watson, whilst she was working for a project on great ape locomotion.

Gorillas usually get around by “knuckle-walking”, using the padding on their front hands to support their huge weight.

By **NICK AMES**

nick.ames@kosmedia.co.uk

However, they can stand on two feet to reach branches and walk for short distances.

But Ambam has managed more than a few steps.

Gorilla keeper Ingrid Naisby said: “He’s always liked to stand up. It’s about getting his balance right. He has perfected it.”

Ambam was born at Port Lympne’s sister park, Howletts, near Canterbury, and is the largest gorilla at the park, at six feet tall.

Keeper Phil Ridges added: “All gorillas can walk to some extent, but we haven’t got any who do it like Ambam and he is quite a celebrity.

“We think he might use it to get a height advantage to look over the wall when keepers come to feed him, and standing up can also help him look for food generally.

“Ambam can also carry a lot more food if he stands and uses both hands, and walking on two feet also means he doesn’t get his hands wet when it’s raining.

“He was hand-raised for a few months when he was a year old, because he became very ill, and as a last resort he had to be taken away from his mother Shumba. He came over to Port Lympne when he was seven or eight years old.

“Ambam’s father, Bitam, used to display the same behaviour if he had handfuls of food to carry.

“He also has a full sister, Tamba, and a half-sister at Howletts, who also sometimes walks.”

This week, Howletts Wild Animal Park has launched a new one-day ticket that allows visitors to come back for a whole year for free.

The cost of the Howletts Passport is £18.95 for an adult and £14.95 for a child, with concessions available.

Bob O’ Connor, managing director



Picture: Kevin Jenner

CELEBRITY: Ambam the gorilla is famed for his ability to walk upright

of Howletts and Port Lympne said: “The idea of the passport is to give something back to our regular supporters by allowing them to enjoy our facilities time after time.

“Howletts is an action-packed day out with a lot to see and do, but the park is also an ideal place just to

meet friends for a coffee or pop in with the kids for an hour.

“There will be different events throughout the year and, as our captive breeding programmes go from strength to strength, many new arrivals so we hope to see our Passport holders on a regular basis.”

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Show will help you discover new horizons



By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

ARCHANT KOS Media's celebrated Travel and Leisure Show is back for a fourth year, and promises to be better than ever.

Visitors will find great ideas for day trips, weekend breaks, and holidays abroad, as well as being in with a chance of winning from a selection of prizes, including a two-week cruise with Fred. Olsen Cruise Line.

And for the first time, a French contingent is making its way across the channel for a new part of the show.

More than 4,000 people attended the 2010 show at the Dover Cruise Terminal, and this year's event, at the same venue from 10am to 4pm on Sunday, March 13, promises to be even better.

Archant KOS Media events manager Liz Hare said: "Every year the show goes from strength to strength, with many return visitors saying they wouldn't miss it."

"We have a completely new area this year devoted entirely to France, featuring 15



HOLIDAY SHOP: Visitors at last year's show find plenty of help with their travel plans

THE travel & leisure SHOW

French companies who have come across the channel to represent their areas.

"Since its launch three years ago this show has been very successful, and with the registrations pouring in and 41 prizes on offer, I hope this year will exceed expectations."

This year's show will run during British Tourism Week, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of Britain's visitor economy. Organisers behind the national event, which runs from March 12-20, gave Archant KOS Media official accreditation for the annual Travel and Leisure Show.

This year visitors will be able to meet exhibitors from top travel and ferry compa-

nies, and those planning to holiday at home can gather information about attractions in Britain and Kent.

Last year's show won the praise of the travel industry, with many putting in early reservations to secure stands in 2011.

Roy and Margaret Jones, from Go Cruise, said: "We're trying to think of words that would sum up the show like fantastic, best show ever, great organisation, amazing, but it doesn't really sum up how good we find it."

There will be a full programme of talks throughout the day covering a wide range of travel and leisure activities.

Food and drink, and a licensed bar, plus children's entertainment will ensure a fun and informative day for all the family.

Entry is free and free parking is available. • For more details about the show see www.thetravelandleisureshow.co.uk or call Liz Hare on 01303 817172.

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IN MY VIEW



By Chris Britcher

Harmless pop TV is filled with glee

GLEE (E4)

FOR an awful lot of people, the word 'glee' means one thing – happiness, delight, anticipation.

But stick a capital letter at the front of it and suddenly you have something of a TV phenomenon among those for whom youth is still firmly on their side, and a smattering of those desperately trying to cling to it.

For Glee, which has this month kicked off season two, is an amalgamation of all the core ingredients required to make TV which pulls in that all important youthful demographic.

It has ridiculously pretty/handsome faces, it has a sharp script, it has a few genuine laughs, and it gets the old trowel out and slaps out well-known hit song after well-known hit song at regular intervals.

To those who have still resisted its charms, it is a very-American blend of comedy, drama and music. Set in a college, the attention focuses around New Directions, a group formed to excel in song and dance and compete in competitions. Apparently, these sorts of clubs, in the US, are 'glee clubs' hence the name.

But the storylines themselves revolve very much around the students which make up the group – their lives, their relationships and all that involves.

All pretty standard dross, you might think. Haven't we seen this formula a million times over? Well, yes, you probably have, but there is a little something about Glee which makes it not quite as gruesome as its billing implies.

Firstly, there are some genuine laughs. Secondly, it rips along at a merry pace, with almost as much emphasis on the battle between the sports and glee clubs and the respective teachers, as there is of the personal issues of the students.

Plus, if ever the pace drops, there's a song performed which will be sufficiently famous and from across the eras to make most viewers go – 'Oh, I know this one' and is usually delivered in a way which will not make you want to pull your hair out.

Granted, it's hardly Nirvana does Britney – nine times out of 10, it's pretty boy/girl singing a very pop version of a memorable tune, but it's relatively inoffensive stuff. What's more, having recently been subjected to my daughter playing one of the Glee soundtrack CDs, it's not too bad. Bubblegum and throwaway it may be, but then that is always the beauty of pop isn't it?

This is aimed fairly and squarely at a particular market and strikes it firmly between the eyes. And for that reason alone, you have to rather warm to it. Granted, it's not the finest piece of drama you'll see. Granted, there are times, as an adult, when you can begin to lose the will to live during it, but there can be no denying that its appeal to the younger generation is remarkable. Crucially, it's bearable if you're a parent forced to sit through it, too. Come at it with low expectations, and, in fact you'll probably be pleasantly surprised.

CINEMA

TANGLED (PG)

BLONDES certainly have more fun in Disney's glorious animated reworking of the Rapunzel fairytale that marries a hilarious script with dazzling and colourful visuals.

The traditional recipe of rousing love ballads and a boo-hiss villain is stirred to perfection by directors Nathan Greno and Byron Howard, who draw heavily from The Little Mermaid as their plucky heroine abandons her tower and explores a world that was previously out of reach.

Crucially, screenwriter Dan Fogelman manages to appeal to both children and adults, peppering his fantasy world with cuddly critters and underscoring the tomfoolery with a romance that tugs the heartstrings without ever becoming cloying.

The 3D format isn't too obtrusive, employed most effectively in a wonderful sequence involving hundreds of fire lanterns, the camera swirling through the sky as the flickering flames dance before our eyes.

Once upon a time... Princess Rapunzel is abducted from the castle by the scheming Mother Gothel, who covets the girl's magical hair. The golden locks shimmer with the secret of eternal youth but must never be cut – or the hair will lose its power and turn brown.

Gothel confines the girl to a tower and convinces the child that she must never leave the high-rise fortress for fear that she will fall victim to the evils of man.

As years pass, Rapunzel longs to explore the world below but must be content with a cheeky chameleon as her solitary friend.

Then as Rapunzel celebrates her 18th birthday, swagging outlaw Flynn Rider happens upon the tower and climbs into Rapunzel's bedroom. At first, the young woman is wary of the intruder but he eventually convinces the fair maiden to disobey Gothel and travel to the castle to witness the annual display of fire lanterns.

Once Gothel discovers her prize asset has escaped her clutches, she gives chase, aided by a pair of dim-witted thugs.

Meanwhile, a tenacious sniffer horse from the palace called Maximus is on Flynn's trail, determined to bring the thief to justice.

Tangled is a delight, carrying us along on Rapunzel and Flynn's haphazard adventure, which includes a rousing song and dance number, I've Got A Dream, in The Snuggly Duckling tavern with the drunken and tattooed regulars.

We leave the cinema with a smile and a joyful tear in the eye.

HEREAFTER (12A)

CLINT Eastwood may be approaching his 80th birthday but the imposing actor-turned director shows no signs of relinquishing his seat behind the camera.

Since 2003, he has released roughly one film every year, winning critical kudos and countless awards for such dazzling humanist dramas as Mystic River, Million Dollar Baby, Flags Of Our Fathers, Changeling, Gran Torino and Invictus.

Eastwood confounds our expectations with this deeply moving tale of loneliness and abandonment, based on a screenplay by Peter Morgan, whose own mantelpiece is crammed with trophies for The Last King Of Scotland, The Queen, and Frost/Nixon.

Opening with a jaw-dropping tsunami sequence tearing through a small beach town in Indonesia, Hereafter draws together three seemingly unconnected stories and poses tantalising questions about mortality.

Like the director's earlier films, characters are observed up close but never judged for their occasionally hurtful actions, leaving us to draw our own conclusions about their conduct and the underlying themes.

French television anchorwoman Marie Lelay is on holiday in south-east Asia with her boyfriend Didier when Mother Nature unleashes her fury upon the community.

Marie is knocked unconscious and almost drowns in the deluge, glimpsing bright white light before she is resuscitated.

In San Francisco, psychic medium George



TANGLED: Disney re-tell the story of Rapunzel to hilarious effect

Lonegan turns his back on his so-called gift, which he views as a curse.

"A life that's all about death is no life at all," laments George, who takes a cookery course where he meets new girl in town, Melanie.

Across the Atlantic in London, Marcus and Jason fend for themselves on a working class housing estate while their drug-addict mother wrestles with her demons. When an accident on the streets tears the family apart, Marcus searches for respite from his grief.

Hereafter brings together the main characters for the briefest of moments, before their paths diverge again.

Performances are exemplary across the board. Eastwood directs with flair, opening with that dramatic action sequence that brings back uncomfortable memories of the 2004 tsunami, before another sensitively handled set piece that draws comparisons with the 2005 underground bombings.

Audiences who expect to be led to clear-cut, satisfying conclusions will be left floundering because the film doesn't pretend to have the answers. Like the characters, we consider our own belief systems and ponder the possibilities that confound and divide even the most brilliant scientific minds.

Live for the present before it is too late.

THE MECHANIC (15)

AS ONE of Hollywood's new generation of hard men, Jason Statham has put the pedal to the metal on numerous occasions to out-manoeuvre cops and bad guys, including high-octane chases in the Transporter films.

The title of Simon West's action-packed thriller suggests the muscular British actor

will be getting his knuckles dirty with more engine grease.

While Statham's character does spend part of the film polishing and rebuilding a classic sports car, the eponymous mechanic is in fact slang for a hitman, who shoots first and growls inane lines of dialogue later.

Michael Winner's 1972 film of the same name pairing Charles Bronson and Jan-Michael Vincent provides the inspiration for this predictable tale of revenge and retribution that intercuts limp banter with well-orchestrated action sequences.

Here, West conceives a botched assassination attempt in a hotel and a bone-crunching fist fight that puts one of his actors through the wringer.

Arthur Bishop (Jason Statham) is one of the best assassins: Clean, efficient and completely ruthless, he kills on demand and foregoes messy personal relationships.

Out of the blue, Arthur receives a call from Dean, who needs the hitman to eliminate a traitor in the organisation.

The target is Arthur's mentor, Harry (Donald Sutherland).

Having put his feelings to one side and successfully completed his mission, Arthur crosses paths with Harry's grief-stricken son, Steve, who implores Arthur to find his father's killer.

Consumed with guilt, Arthur decides to take on Steve as an apprentice, training him in the art of assassination. Alas, the newcomer's impetuosity and fiery temperament make him a major liability.

The Mechanic is everything you expect from a film bearing Statham's name: Loud, simplistic and bruising for a brawl.

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Tell Claire on a Sunday

One-woman show is packed with popular songs



BY ED HILL

CLAIRE Sweeney is a lucky woman and she knows it.

"I am blessed. I love my job and there's hardly a day when I get up and think I don't want to go to work," she explains.

"I grew up in a small terraced house in Liverpool. I have had such a nice life and enjoyed my job. It has taken me to many great places and I have met many great people because of it."

From TV to stage, her career shows little sign of slowing. And as she prepares for a string of performances in Bromley next month, her new leading role in the Andrew Lloyd Webber show *Tell Me on a Sunday* has just added to that lucky streak.

She said: "I spent years singing these songs in social clubs around Liverpool and now to be performing them in the original show is great. It was the ultimate feeling for me when Andrew came to see it."

The one-woman show is a collaboration between Lloyd Webber and Oscar-winning lyricist Don Black.

Black is perhaps most famous for his film songs such as *Born Free* and the title song of a number of James Bond movies, among them *Tomorrow Never Dies*, *The Man With the Golden Gun*, and *Diamonds Are Forever*.

He worked on the musical with Lloyd Webber after he briefly fell out with his regular lyricist at the time, Tim Rice. It was first staged in 1979 as an hour-long show featuring Marti Webb.

Pathos and tears

"It's basically a story told in songs about a woman who looks for love in all the wrong places," says Sweeney.

"But there's lots of laughter, pathos and tears; there's a bit of everything in it. Don has this brilliant ability to get into the mindset of a woman's head and tell stories. Andrew just writes beautiful scores. It really helps to love a song you're singing."

More numbers have been written by the composer to make this production an hour and a half long.

Sweeney is on stage the whole time, singing 28 songs; a tough task for any soloist.

She said: "I have to live like a nun and really look after myself. There is no drinking or partying. I have to be really good. The role is a great combination for an actress. It's a challenge vocally but it's also a great acting piece. To keep an audience interested for an hour and a half means it must be great material."

Sweeney began her professional career as a singer before first becoming known to the public playing Lindsey Corkhill in now defunct Channel 4 soap opera *Brookside*.

Since then she has appeared in a string of well known musicals and pantos but still remained a familiar face on TV, appearing in the first series of *Strictly Come Dancing* and as a presenter and guest on shows such as *Loose Women* and *60 Minute Makeover*.

She says conveying a song is not just about having a perfect voice.

"The acting for this show is in the music, it's not just about standing there. Look at someone like Amy Winehouse. Her voice may be a bit raw but she really knows how to express a song and interpret a lyric. That is what makes her such a great artist. It's important to be able to convey the story and move people.



SINGING HER HEART OUT:
Claire Sweeney stars in *Tell Me On A Sunday*

Picture: DONALD COOPER

"I really love that connection with a live audience; if it is a good piece of theatre that makes it even better. It's not just about making pretty sounds."

This latest touring production of the show began last year. It will be at the Churchill Theatre in Bromley from February 8-12.

Claire said: "Last year it was hard because we were in different venues every night but this time the tour is a little bit easier because we are in one place for a week which gives me a bit of stability."

The show is certainly full of well-known songs, too.

"I think audiences will be surprised at the number of songs they know from this show. There are classics such as *Take That Look Off Your Face*, as well as the title song. A lot of these tunes are in people's minds they just don't know they are from this show."

Sweeney says she loves performing in front of a live audience, but has no favourite way in which to show off her talent. She will soon be appearing on our screens in a new show for the BBC.

She said: "I have a new TV show coming out called *Candy Cabs*. It is a comedy drama about two women who set up an all female taxi com-

pany in the North West. It has been really great filming that."

Perhaps it is being so versatile that has helped Sweeney create her own luck.

She said: "I love the fact that I have the choice to do both stage and screen work and am not pigeonholed. I'm fortunate. I can do a comedy drama on television and then do a theatre show. I hope it carries on like that."

• *Tell me on a Sunday* is at the Churchill Theatre in Bromley from Tuesday to Saturday, February 8-12. For tickets, call 0844 871 7627 www.ambassadorickets.com/The-Churchill.

ATTRACTIONS

THE Vue Thanet cinema will screen a special one-off performance of the sold-out Shakespearian tragedy King Lear, live from the Donmar Warehouse in London's Covent Garden.

The play, which explores the essence of human nature, from love and hate to power and loss, will be screened at 6.45pm on Thursday, February 3, by a special satellite broadcast.

The production is led by acclaimed actor Derek Jacobi, as

the ageing monarch King Lear.

The play follows King Lear's descent into madness after dividing his kingdom between two of his three daughters, Goneril and Regan, who he deems to love him the most and disowning his third daughter, Cornelia for not being able to describe her devotion to him. As events unfold King Lear sees his two successors turn on him and Cornelia, now Queen of France, come to his aide. The tale ends in all out war between the sisters, finally ending the era of King Lear and his three daughters.

Tickets to the live performance cost £12.50 and can be booked at www.myvue.com.

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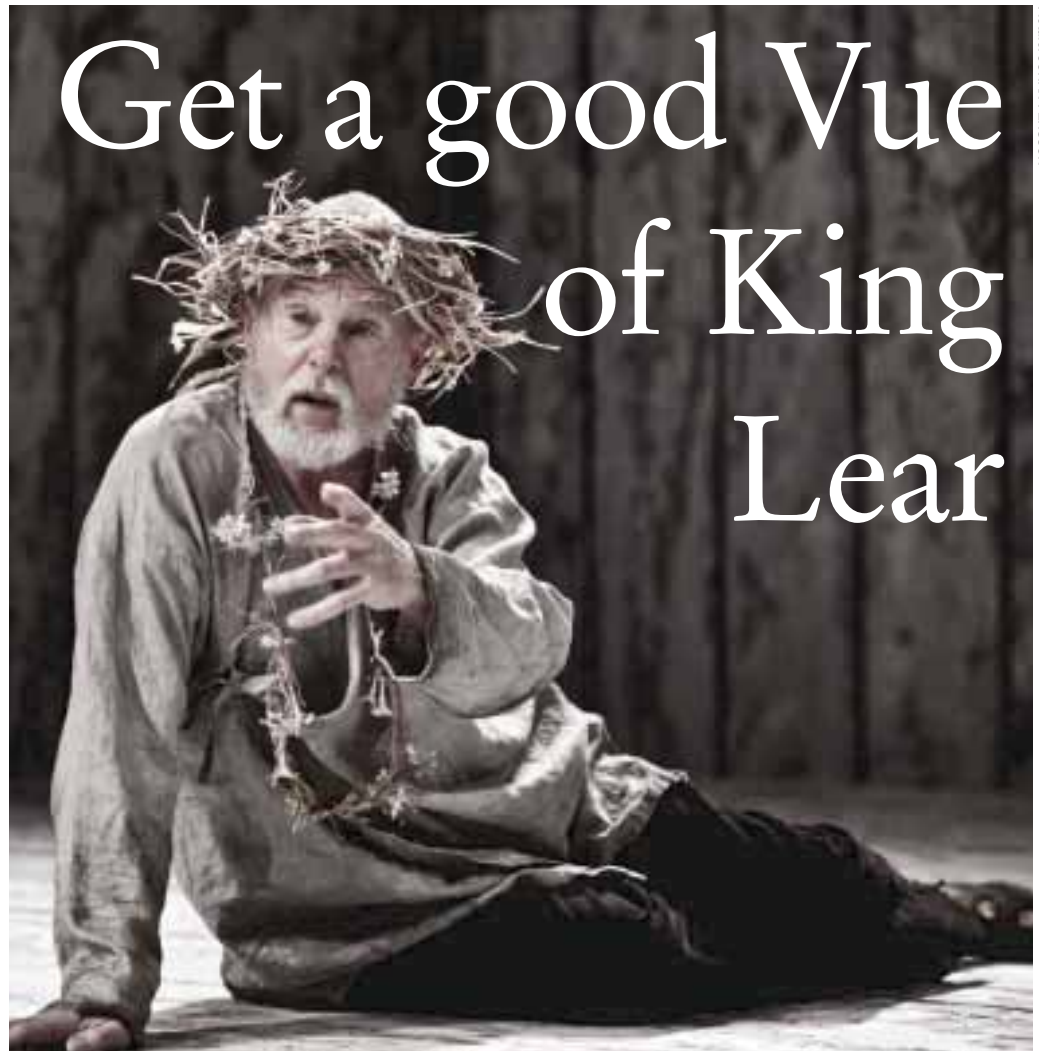
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Picture: JOHAN PERSSON

Have a lion's share

A COLOURFUL play to celebrate Chinese New Year is being staged at Hazlitt Arts Centre in Maidstone.

Why The Lion Danced tells the story of how every 13th moon the monster Nian visits a village and the people find their New Year celebrations disrupted.

The only creature that scares away the Nian is the lion, but the next year when the Nian revisits the village the lion is guarding the Emperor's palace and cannot help the villagers.

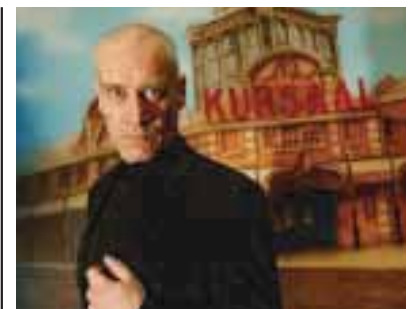
So to scare off the monster they create a lion costume, perform a lion dance and scare away the evil one. A lion dance is still performed in China to this day and is said to bring good luck and happiness.



Picture: ALASTAIR MAIR

This production by Yellow Earth Theatre features a spectacularly decorated lion costume and mask. It includes shadow play, original live music and songs, and has been created for families with children aged five and over. After the show the audience will be invited to join the performers in celebrating Chinese New Year.

The show is on Wednesday, February 2, at 1.30pm, for details see www.hazlittartscentre.co.uk or call 01622 758611.



Feel good about music legend's gig

GUITAR star Wilko Johnson is performing at the Horsebridge Centre in Whitstable next month.

The former member of Dr Feelgood is famous for his aggressive style of R'n'B, and his band includes bassist Norman Watt-Roy, who performed with Ian Dury in the Blockheads.

The support act for the show on Saturday, February 5, will be new Whitstable indie guitar band Gamma Ray Kids.

Singer Mike Turner, 37, said: "Supporting music legend Wilko Johnson is a dream for us. It's quite a big deal for our first gig and we're so happy it's in our home town. We've been solidly rehearsing our set."

Gamma Ray Kids, who formed a year ago, rehearse in the scout hut on Whitstable beach and you will likely hear a preview of the show if you are passing.

Tickets, priced at £15, are available by calling the Box Office on 01227 281174 or email booking@horsebridge-centre.org.uk to find out more.

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RESTAURANT REVIEW

BY ERICA JONES

WHEN I lived in Rochester the Raj of India was my Indian take-away of choice.

Not only did I like their food, I also liked that they never even batted an eyelid when all I would order was a selection of starters – what can I say, I like the variety.

So when the opportunity arose to finally go and eat in the restaurant it was with both excitement and trepidation that I went along – what if, after all this time, it wasn't as good as I remembered?

Fortunately, it was. We were met by a friendly waiter who showed us to our table and offered us popadoms while we looked over the menu. Considering our visit was early on a Monday evening I was surprised to see quite a few other diners, but given my previous experiences of the eatery this merely backed up my expectations.

Once the popadoms and chutneys were devoured, our starters were swiftly delivered. I had chosen my old favourite (and a must on that take-away order list) of prawn puree (£3.75) and am pleased to report it was as good as I remembered – the prawns served up on a traditional bread and cooked in a delicious sauce with a bit of a kick that always gets my tastebuds going.



To continue my tradition of ordering a strange selection, rather than having a regular starter my guest opted to begin their meal with a side dish of sag paneer (£2.95). I could-

n't help but laugh as the waiter served a dish of what looked to be cheese and spinach soup, but I was assured it was good, and the swift emptying of the bowl backed up this claim.

My guest then moved on to a mushroom biryani (£5.50), accompanied by peshwari naan (£1.95). Both were eagerly tucked into, but I was informed that while enjoyable the biryani was missing something. In contrast my chicken tikka sag (£6.95) was delicious. The chicken pieces were beautifully tender and perfectly complemented by the spinach.

Having eaten more than we should, we were eventually forced to give up, but not before we arranged for everything to be packed up to be polished off later at home.

I had a thoroughly enjoyable meal, but it was my guest who summed up the evening the most accurately by describing the food as comforting. At first I thought she was being unfair, but knowing there's a good, reliable restaurant which serves warm, tasty dishes is definitely a comforting thought.

And at £31.60 for a meal for two plus drinks the price isn't too painful either.

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Review recipe

CARAMELIZED SHALLOT TART



(Serves 4)
750g small shallots, peeled and halved
or quartered (depending on size)
2 garlic cloves, crushed
40g butter
1tbsp olive oil
20g light muscovado sugar
40ml brandy
1tsp fresh thyme
Salt and pepper to taste
1 sheet ready rolled puff pastry
1 egg, whisked (for egg wash)

FIRSTLY, pre-heat the oven to 200C (fan oven).

In a large saucepan, add the olive oil and butter and put on to a fairly high heat.

Once the butter has melted, add the shallots and garlic and cook for five minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the sugar and cook for five more minutes. Add the brandy and thyme, and cook for another five minutes. Then reduce the heat and cook for 10 more minutes. Season to taste.

Get a sheet of ready rolled pastry and cut two even, circular shapes out.

Put these circles on to a greaseproof paper-lined baking tray.

Cut a border round the edge of the circles and prick the middle parts with a fork (to stop the middle of the tart from rising).

Spoon the onion mixture on to the middle of the two bases evenly. Brush egg round the border of the pastry and place in the oven for 25 minutes.

Remove from the oven and serve.

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By SARAH O'MEARA

"TURN zat down," yells the Italian restaurateur Aldo Zilli to a passing waiter, as he attempts to hear my questions down the phone.

With the music blaring in the background swiftly turned off, the 54-year-old repeats sharply: "What do you want?"

I'm hoping to speak to him about judging a competition to find the UK's best meat-free dish, sadly he seems rather underwhelmed by the idea – until I mention the event's sponsor, Linda McCartney Foods.

His tone suddenly melting like butter, the chef coos: "I'm doing zees because I love ze McCartneys. She was one of our best customers. The family have been using our restaurants for over 20 years now, even before it was veggie," he continues, all ferocity gone as we get on to one of his favourite subjects.

More like a chef-to-the-celebrities than a celebrity chef, the explosive and temperamental Zilli has been cooking for and

A vegetarian legacy for Linda

befriending famous faces since the 80s, when his London restaurants Signor Zilli and Zilli Fish were more popular than The Ivy.

Now Zilli, along with Celebrity Masterchef 2008 winner Liz McClarnon, is helping Linda McCartney Foods find a new vegetarian recipe to add to its range.

"I remember Linda and the family coming to the restaurant for lunch. They'd have loads of different pastas, risottos and stuffed vegetables. We used to create dishes for them," explains the chef, whose innovative approach to Italian cuisine and subsequent book and TV career made him a household name.

"They're such an easy, down-to-earth family. Their son James still comes in a lot. He's vegan and so is my chef, so he feels right at home."

Last year, with the McCartneys' ideals as

inspiration, Zilli opened his first solely vegetarian restaurant: "I was very bold because in a business sense, I didn't know if it was going to work or not. But I did it for them, for the McCartneys," the chef continues, his love beginning to sound slightly mawkish.

Moving the conversation swiftly on, we discuss how difficult it is to adopt vegetarian cooking habits.

"It was an intense period of learning. I had to get my creative head on, go outside of the box and start using ingredients like quinoa, spelt, barley, chickpeas – all those lovely proteins I wouldn't normally eat."

Now a firm convert to the leafy way ("I'm now about 85 per cent veggie") Zilli was even hired by renowned healthy eater Leona Lewis to cook for her tour.

"The hardest thing is flavour. I use a lot of herbs, I never used to use as many as I do now. Quite strong ones like sage, tarragon, rosemary and garlic. They're all healthy and good for you."

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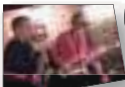
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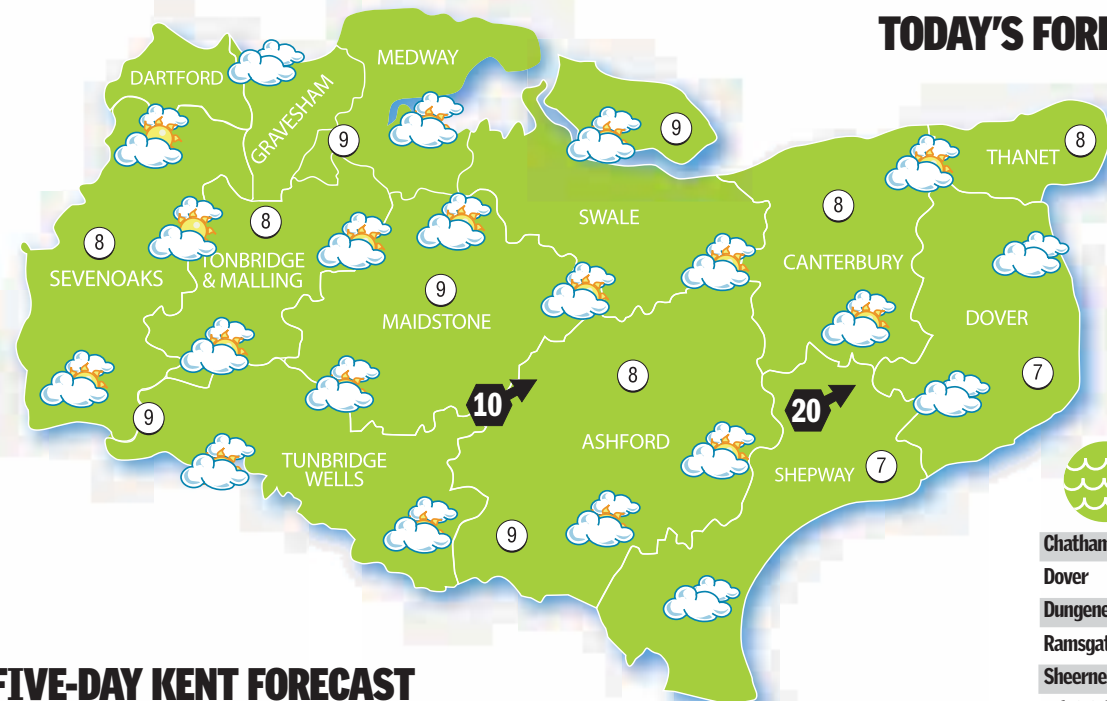


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Athens	10°C	New York	4°C
Barcelona	10°C	Paris	-1°C
Beijing	6°C	Rome	11°C
Bombay	31°C	Sydney	34°C
Cape Town	28°C	Tenerife	20°C
Cardiff	1°C	Tokyo	6°C
Gibraltar	13°C	Vancouver	5°C
Hong Kong	15°C	Warsaw	-2°C
Las Palmas	19°C	Wellington	23°C



KENT'S WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	2:18pm 5.9m	Sunday	2:49pm 5.8m
Dover	Saturday	12:27pm 6.4m	Sunday	12:58pm 6.3m
Dungeness	Saturday	12:26pm 7.3m	Sunday	12:58pm 7.3m
Ramsgate	Saturday	12:57pm 4.9m	Sunday	1:28pm 4.8m
Sheerness	Saturday	2:08pm 5.6m	Sunday	2:39pm 5.6m
Whitstable	Saturday	2:11pm 5.1m	Sunday	2:41pm 5.1m

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon																							
Ashford	8°C	9°C	9°C	11°C	11°C	Dover	7°C	7°C	8°C	9°C	10°C	Gravesend	8°C	9°C	9°C	12°C	13°C	Sevenoaks	7°C	8°C	7°C	10°C	10°C		SUNRISE	7.33am	SUNSET	4.45pm
Canterbury	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	11°C	Faversham	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	12°C	Maidstone	8°C	9°C	9°C	11°C	12°C	Sittingbourne	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	12°C		MOONRISE	6.59am	MOONSET	4.26pm
Chatham	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	12°C	Folkestone	7°C	7°C	8°C	9°C	10°C	Ramsgate	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	11°C	Tonbridge	8°C	10°C	9°C	11°C	12°C					
Dartford	8°C	9°C	9°C	12°C	13°C	Gillingham	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	12°C	Rochester	7°C	9°C	8°C	11°C	12°C	Tun Wells	8°C	10°C	9°C	11°C	12°C					

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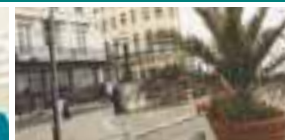
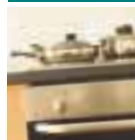
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Folkestone A stunning 2 bedroom bungalow which has been extensively modernised and extended to a very high standard, situated in the heart of the West End of Folkestone. Price: £380,000



Folkestone An impressive 6 bedroom family house enjoying many period features and substantial accommodation set in the heart of the West End. Price: £595,000



Sandgate A detached 5 bedroom split level house situated in an exclusive gated cul-de-sac with landscaped gardens, balcony and wonderful views of the sea and coastline of Hythe Bay. Price: £495,000



Hawkinge A stunning 5 bedroom executive style house offering spacious and well presented accommodation with attractive and well stocked south westerly facing garden. Price: £420,000



Folkestone Substantial 5 bedroom detached house offering spacious accommodation with swimming pool. In one of the most sought after cul-de-sac locations within the West End. Price: £745,000



Folkestone An extremely comfortable and bright 4 bedroom detached house enjoying a sunny aspect set within beautiful and well stocked gardens in a popular residential area. Price: £430,000

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Cliftonville Office
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Birchington Office
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Property of the Week



St Peters

- Enjoy The Village Life
- Immaculate Starter Home
- Two Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- Modern Kitchen
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Enclosed Rear Garden

£147,500



Property of the Week



Broadstairs

- Sought After Location
- Two Bedrooms
- Charm And Character
- Kitchen/Diner
- Gas Central Heating
- Sash Windows
- Communal Grounds
- No Chain !!!

£189,995



Manston Offers Invited £34,995

- Two Bedrooms
- Lounge With Fireplace
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Master En-Suite



Birchington £85,000

- Two Bedrooms
- Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
- Allocated Parking
- Sought After Location

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Margate £99,995

- Two / Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Kitchen / Diner
- Conservatory



Dumpton £134,995

- Two Bedrooms
- Newly Fitted Kitchen
- Newly Fitted Bathroom
- Lounge With French Doors



Cliftonville £152,500

- Three Bedrooms 40ft Rear Garden
- D.S Shower Room
- Tlc Needed



Minster £159,995

- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge/Diner
- Kitchen
- Family Bathroom



Birchington £168,000

- Seaviews
- Integral Garage
- Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
- Balcony



Ramsgate £194,995

- Three Bedrooms
- Two Reception Rooms
- 22'7" Kitchen/Diner
- Family Bathroom



Cliftonville £229,995

- Two Bedrooms
- Loft Room With En-Suite
- Fitted Kitchen
- Conservatory



Ramsgate OIEO £265,000

- Five Bedrooms
- Three Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Bathroom And Shower Room



Cliftonville £299,995

- Such Character And Charm!
- 4 Beds, 2 Recepts
- Garage & Ample Osp
- Gardens To 2 Sides



Cliftonville £315,000

- Four Bedroom Detached
- Stunning Gardens
- V Sought After Location
- Parking For 4/5 Cars



Ramsgate £354,995

- Six / Seven Bedrooms
- Period Features
- Off Street Parking
- Enclosed Rear Garden



Manston £449,995

- Four Bedrooms
- En-Suite To Master
- Oak Fitted Kitchen/Diner
- Conservatory

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AUCTION

Five-Day February Sale

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Day 1 - The Ramada Hotel & Resort, Maidstone - Monday, 14th February - 11am.

Day 2 - The Hilton Brighton Metropole - Tuesday, 15th February - 11am.

Day 3 - The Rose Bowl, Southampton - Wednesday, 16th February - 11am.

Day 4 - The Legacy Plymouth International - Thursday, 17th February - 3pm.

Day 5 - The Penventon Park Hotel, Redruth - Friday, 18th February - 11am.



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House or changed to 2 flats (one vacant)
Guide: £110-115,000



KINGSDOWN
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Town Centre Restaurant with residential
Guide: £250-260,000



ALLINGTON
Bungalow for Improvement
Guide: £120,000 Plus



HERNE BAY
Home for Improvement
Guide: £105-115,000



FAVERSHAM
Substantial Town Centre Premises
Guide: £135-145,000



MINSTER-ON-SEA, SHEERNESS
Former Newspaper Site for Refurb.
Guide: £80-90,000



CHARING HEATH
Bungalow with Outbuildings
Guide: £120-130,000



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Guide: £25-30,000



SHEERNESS
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STROOD
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SNODLAND
Shop with Corner Parts
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EDGEWOOD
Semi for Improvement
Guide: £10-125,000



MARGATE
1.7 Acres of Land with Development Potential
Guide: £30-35,000



RAMSGATE
Public House in Good Location
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CHATHAM
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GILLINGHAM
Site for Two Hangars
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Guide: £290-300,000



STROOD
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Guide: £95-100,000



CANTERBURY
Land with Planning Pending
Guide: £110-115,000



HERNE BAY
Home for Improvement & Repair
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SHEPHERDSWELL
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SIDCUP
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PRESTON, FAVERSHAM
Public House with Potential
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GILLINGHAM
Home for Improvement
Guide: £65-75,000



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MARGATE
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LAND AND PROPERTY AUCTIONEERS



Property of the week
Ramsgate - £149,995

TMS are pleased to promote For Sale this well presented end of terrace, two storey house comprising three bedrooms with lounge, kitchen/dining room and bathroom. There is a southerly facing rear garden and benefits include gas central heating and double glazing where stated. Located in a popular residential district of Ramsgate towards the Eastside of town close to local shops, main bus routes, King George VI park and clifftop walks. Viewing is highly recommended.



Ramsgate - £94,995

Semi Detached Three Bedroom House
 Works Required
 No Onwards Chain
 Popular Location.



Palm Bay - £114,995

Purpose Built Two Bedroom Flat
 Immaculate Throughout
 No Onwards Chain
 Off Street Parking.



Margate - £124,995

Terraced Two Bedroom House
 Approx 40ft Rear Garden
 Excellent Order Throughout
 Viewing Highly Recommended.



Palm Bay - £137,995

Purpose Built Two Bedroom Apartment
 Immaculate Throughout
 Fitted Kitchen
 Garage Plus Parking Space.



Palm Bay - £144,995

Modern Terraced Two Bedroom House
 Garage En-Bloc
 Gardens To Front & Rear
 Close To Seafront



Ramsgate - £172,000

Detached Three Bedroom House
 Gardens To Front & Rear
 Off Street Parking
 Convenient Location



Garlinge - £179,995

Semi Detached Three Bedroom House
 Character Features
 Extended Accommodation
 No Onwards Chain



Kingsgate - £189,000

Semi Detached Two Bedroom Bungalow
 Garage Plus Driveway
 Approx 50ft Garden
 Walking Distance Of Beach



Broadstairs - £215,000

Detached Two Bedroom Bungalow
 80ft Rear Garden
 Potential For Parking
 Highly Desirable Location



Broadstairs - £239,995

Detached Two Bedroom Bungalow
 Spacious Kitchen
 Superbly Presented
 Garage Plus Driveway



Palm Bay - £249,995

Detached Four Bedroom House
 Garage Plus Drive
 Close To Seafont
 800 Yards From Beach



Cliftonville - £249,999

Detached 5 Bedroom House
 3 Large Reception Rooms
 70FT Rear Garden
 Off Street Parking



Cliftonville - £255,000

Detached Four Bedroom House
 Double Garage Plus Drive
 Popular Location
 Gardens To Front & Rear



Broadstairs - £350,000

Detached Six Bedroom House
 Central Location
 Character Features
 Off Street Parking



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Keep Kent Working!

2011 Campaign

It's jobs for Kent

Keep Kent Working! It's jobs for Kent

'County has the skills we need for success'

Plan to invest in apprenticeships

THOUSANDS of apprenticeships could be created from a 15-year investment plan being considered by councils in east Kent.

Dover, Folkestone, Canterbury and Thanet are all set to benefit from the East Kent Local Investment Plan 2011-2026, which aims to bring jobs and housing to the region on behalf of a wide range of community partners, including Kent County Council and the Government's Homes and Communities Agency.

Based on a best-case scenario of £300 million investment through the project, an estimated 2,000 apprenticeships could be created in the region.

However, even a much lower sum of £69m would still create about 460 apprenticeships.

The plan looks at key strategic priorities and major projects for each district to bring investment, jobs and housing for the future. It has been brought together to inform future investment decisions for the region, including through the new Local Enterprise Partnership and other programmes, where appropriate.

Dover council is the first to approve the plans, which leader Cllr Paul Watkins said he was "delighted" about.

He added: "It is vital that we continue to work with all partners to make the strongest case for future investment for Dover district and east Kent.

"The strategic and local priorities from a Dover perspective add value to east Kent, and a number of local schemes are already construction-ready and will continue to bring major private sector investment to the area.

"The work already undertaken in a range of areas in Dover – including having growth point status and our local development framework in place – has set firm foundations for growth, and with the approval of the local investment plan we are looking forward to seeing continued regeneration and investment for the future."

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

THE chairman of the Kent Association of Young Entrepreneurs (KAYE) has urged employers to pull together and help grow the county's workforce.

David Ing is the latest name to back this newspaper's Keep Kent Working campaign, praising the initiative for its goal of bringing businesses closer together for the benefit of prospective employees throughout the region.

"There's a lot to be said for looking after your own community, and Keep Kent Working fits in with that ethos," he said.

"Kent has such a rich source of talented people and such a diverse range of businesses, so why would anybody need to go outside of it? We should all be working together for the greater good of the county.

"KAYE works closely with the University of Kent and with Canterbury Christ Church, and it's a shocking statistic that something like 80 per cent of graduates will end up leaving Kent. We're trying to encourage them to stay here and back other businesses in the county, and that goes hand-in-hand with the Keep Kent Working campaign."

The Kent Association of Young Entrepreneurs was launched to support young-minded business people who are either running their own company, seriously considering starting one, or working their way up the corporate ladder.

Originally aimed at young people, Mr Ing admits the recession has had a big effect on the age range of its 200-plus members.

"We've got some members who are over 40 and even over 50, and the main reason is that people have been made redundant and decided to go out on their own. But the principles KAYE has are the same, no matter how old you are.

"We're there to provide support, guidance and access to other people for entrepreneurs,



SUPPORT: David Ing is urging employers to source their workforce from within Kent

because it's good to know there are other people out there who are in the same boat as you. It's safety in numbers."

As well as being the chairman of KAYE, Mr Ing is also managing director of the Maidstone-based marketing agency CFA.

He is also a member of the Institute of Directors' Kent executive committee and of the Kent Ambassadors group.

Mr Ing was in positive mood when asked

how well-placed he thought the county was for the inevitable economic recovery.

He said: "I think it's well positioned. We've got great links to Europe and the Olympics are just around the corner.

"The only negative is that businesses in the county are not as good at bringing people together, and that's where I think the Keep Kent Working campaign can help."

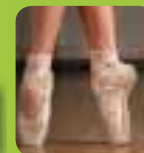
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Scholarship scheme benefits art students

STUDENTS at the University for the Creative Arts are reaping the benefits of scholarships worth up to £15,000 each.

The economic climate means scholarships – paid for by alumni, governors and friends of the university – make a big difference to those suffering from financial difficulties.

Seventeen students are taking advantage of the scheme, having been awarded placements across its campuses in Canterbury, Maidstone and Rochester, and Epsom and Farnham in Surrey.

“The Government’s proposed rise in tuition fees means it is vital for us to offer scholarships to those who may not be able to afford to go to university,” said head of development Matthew Horton.

“We have begun developing our awards now, so that we have a generous portfolio of scholarships and bursaries available by 2012 to help as many students as possible to fulfil their potential.”

UCA chairman and former MasterChef host Loyd Grossman is one of several people to have made significant contributions to the scholarship programme, as has the university’s vice-chancellor, Professor Elaine Thomas.

The scholarships are awarded to undergraduate and postgraduate students from any background, who are judged to have shown outstanding creative potential in their chosen field in the arts.

Jacque Brown, from Broadstairs, was



PRACTICAL HELP: Jacque Browne with her benefactor, Loyd Grossman

able to progress from a foundation course at UCA Canterbury to a degree in graphic communication at UCA Farnham, thanks to the financial support of Loyd Grossman.

She said: “Finding out I had won the scholarship greatly increased my confidence, but practically it has helped me to afford the extras I need for my course, which is very material-intensive.

“All of this is helping me enhance my work.”

Details of the university’s scholarships for 2011 will be released at the end of February.

Visit www.ucreative.ac.uk/scholarships.

Open day for graduates

THE University of Kent is holding a post-graduate open day from 11am-3pm on Saturday, February 5.

Prospective students are invited to attend so they can learn about the funding schemes available to them, including the university’s multi-million pound postgraduate scholarship fund.

The event at the Canterbury campus will also provide information about the extensive range of part-time and full-time courses on offer, with visitors able to tour

the accommodation and study facilities.

Professor Diane Houston, dean of the university’s graduate school, said: “Postgraduate education is of increasing importance both to students and universities.

“I hope our open day will help inform the choices of graduates who would like to study for academic interest or to further their careers.”

Visit www.kent.ac.uk/opendays to register your interest in the open day.

Students enlist just for day

PUBLIC service students received a taste of life in the Army as part of their Level 2 BTEC Diploma.

The Canterbury College youngsters spent a day with troops based at Shorncliffe Barracks, near Folkestone, where they learned techniques such as low-level tactics, moving in formation and close-quarter combat skills.

Of the 15 who took part, more than half said the experience had given them a real interest in pursuing a career in the armed forces.

Public services co-ordinator Howard Gilbert said: “They worked hard for their Army instructors and supported each other to overcome any challenges.

“It is always good to see how students perform outside the classroom, and they



COMBAT: Students’ taste of Army life

certainly rose to the occasion.”

Courses within the college’s public services department involve activity-based teaching and learning and are led by staff from the forces and emergency services.



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01634 402020



MidKent College
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Apprenticeship Week 7-11 February 2011



Summary of events in Thanet:

Monday 7th February

- Launch of Training Solutions Facebook site
- College Apprenticeship Graduation event



Tuesday 8th February

- Thanet College recruits ‘The Apprentice’

Wednesday 9th February

- Principal Graham Razez - live interview on Academy FM at 11.15am
- Drop-in session about Apprenticeships - College Library 12 midday until 5.00pm

Thursday 10th February

- Training Solutions take over the Community Hub at Westwood Cross 10am-1pm

Friday 11th February

- Training Solutions take over the Community Hub at Westwood Cross 10am-1pm
- Thanet College hosting the Coastal College Consortium for the ‘Employer Engagement Task Group’

Saturday 12th February

- Apprenticeship Bus will be at Westwood Cross from 8.30am-6.00pm.
- Launch of a range of new Thanet College Apprenticeship programmes



Events run by Training Solutions
At Work - Through Work - For Work
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Working knowledge of mediation is preferred but not essential. You will have management, marketing and business development skills and experience of managing and motivating volunteers.

Salary for the post is pro rata £28,860 p.a. You will be required to work 24 hours per week. Some evening work may be required. Driving license is essential. This post is subject to a Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure Check

If you are interested in this exciting opportunity please send your C.V with a covering letter to: PO Box 482, Ashford, Kent. TN23 9PY

Closing date is Friday 18th February 2011



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The role is for a person who wants a challenge and further their career in care.

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Coastal Services Division

The Coastal Services Division of Gardline Environmental Ltd provides a variety of survey and windfarm services and specialist vessels for contracts and charters. These include Windfarm Turbine Transfers, Hydrographic Surveys and Guard Boat duties. Due to the award of some major long-term contracts across the UK, we are seeking persons suitable for the following positions:

SKIPPER

The ideal candidate must possess previous experience at sea on 10m to 20m vessels, using a variety of propulsion methods. As a minimum, an RYA Powerboat Level 2 Certificate and an ENG-1 medical certificate are required. A VHF, First Aid and sea survival certificates would be an advantage as would experience of training support staff in boat operations. We have several experienced support staff as well as those beginning their careers at sea, so your ability to encourage and guide is important.

The successful candidate must be able to demonstrate their boat handling skills, leadership qualities and problem solving abilities. Your calmness, confidence and initiative will be key to your success as one of our skippers within our team.

ABLE SEAMEN

In this role we are looking for individuals who have commercial and or leisure boat experience in an all-round support role. Your positive attitude and approach to the work and practical learning will be key to your success and progression. You must be someone who can accurately follow instructions and take responsibility for given tasks, working closely with and providing support to the Skipper regarding all aspects of vessel operations.

Working for Coastal Services, is physically demanding and will require nationwide travel and periods of time away at sea. We do operate on rotations appropriate to contract, usually 16 days on (including travel) and 14 days off, but for ALL the above roles you will need to be flexible and willing to work outside the core business hours on occasions. Ideally we are looking to recruit people from the localities of our contracts, but this is not essential.

If you are interested in working with us, please send your CV and Cover Letter via e-mail detailing your experience, skills and qualifications along with your availability to Allan Tucker, Project Manager at allan.tucker@gardline.com

Closing date: Thursday 10th February 2011

Experienced Timber Sales/Sales Person

Required
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Must have own transport due to location

Please send your CV to: glenn@orlestoneoak.co.uk
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Please email your CV to info@hazelmotors.co.uk or call 01634 406664

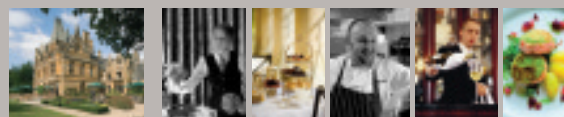
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Keith Salter, Practice Manager
Town Medical Centre

25 London Road, Sevenoaks TN13 1AR



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You will have strong numeric skills, good Excel knowledge and demonstrate excellent attention to detail. Previous knowledge of Opera and Sage is desirable.

Please apply with CV and covering letter with current salary details to: Keely Dobinson at kdobinson@handpicked.co.uk

Closing date: 11th February 2011.

www.handpicked.co.uk



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Alzheimer's & Dementia

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registered Charity Number 1024385

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA?

Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services is a registered charity which supports people with dementia and their carers

We are looking for **CARERS** to support people in their own homes. You will need to have a genuine interest in people with dementia plus patience and empathy in abundance. Experience of caring for people or NVQ level 2 required. In return we will offer you specialist training, hours to suit you, and the opportunity to work for a friendly caring charity.

Rate of pay will be £8.00 per hour, plus 4 weeks annual leave.

For application forms and further information contact Judith West 01474 533990 or email judith.west@alz-dem.org

Closing date for completed applications 21st Feb, 2011.

To advertise in this section

01303 817040



Sales Co-ordinator

HV Wooding are a well established and successful manufacturing company producing metal components to customer specification, owing to growth in the business and to assist in the development of future opportunities we have a vacancy for a Sales Co-ordinator.

We are looking for an experienced Sales Co-ordinator to join our busy sales team, the candidate should have proven experience in the following areas:

- Enquiry Management/Sales Admin
- Marketing
- Account Management
- Team Leading

Reporting to the Sales Director you will be responsible for the general co-ordination of the sales team using effective team leading skills to move the team forward and to enhance performance. You will take a hands on pro-active role in developing the Marketing approach for the company, this is aimed at new business generation.

You will need to be numerate and have good attention to detail with a methodical approach to your work together with excellent communication and organisational skills. Experience working in a manufacturing business with some technical knowledge would be of benefit but not essential as full process/product training will be provided. A good knowledge of 'MS Office' software is also required.

This is a key role within the business and will be of interest to someone with Enquiry Management and Marketing experience looking for a challenging and rewarding role.

Please send your CV to jolson@hvwooding.co.uk

We are seeking a first class

Book-Keeper/Account Administrator

with an enthusiastic and committed approach, to work in our Head Office based in Marden, Kent to start as soon as possible

- A good working knowledge of Sage
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to work as part of a team and to play a key role in this growing company
- Self motivated and organised
- At least two years' experience in a similar position

The Kindergartens are a family run group of successful and well established nursery schools situated in Central London

A competitive salary and conditions are offered

For further details and a full description of the post please email: nicky.peckham@thekindergartens.co.uk

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

www.thekindergartens.com

THE KINDERGARTENS



All Seasons donates 100% of the surplus profit to, and works in partnership with, registered charity Kent Enterprise Trust.

all seasons care services

Looking for a new challenge? Why not make a difference to someone's life and work with us as a community care worker?

Experience **NOT** required but passion is essential.

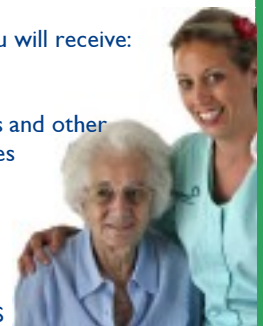
Visit www.allseasons.org.uk or call **01 227 265 899** for more information.

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The future of local media

Be a part of an exciting and growing team developing our portfolio across Kent

Media Sales Executives - Field Based x3 Full Time permanent - Ashford and Weald Full Time permanent - Tunbridge Wells and West Kent Full Time permanent - Medway

KOS Media look for highly motivated people to create and sell multi-media solutions in our market leading portfolio including newspapers, magazines and digital sales.

We believe and pride ourselves in good customer service, professional marketing solutions and excellent business relationships. We provide innovative ideas that will in return give our clients real value and response.

Looking after and growing an existing customer base along with finding new business will form the basis of the job role. You will need to be a self motivated individual with sales experience, good communicator, tenacious and hard working to succeed in this environment.

Telephone Sales Executives x2 Maternity Cover fixed term 12 months Full Time permanent

If you are highly driven, confident, a self motivated team player with good communication skills, who is able to work under pressure to deadlines and targets, in our fast paced and fun telesales department, then apply.

You will be office based and working with an existing client base of advertisers where customer service is paramount, but you must also be able to search out new business to develop and grow your territory revenues and opportunities.

We believe and pride ourselves in good customer service, professional marketing solutions and excellent business relationships. We provide innovative ideas that will in return give our clients real value and response.

Media experience is not essential as full training will be given.

We offer an excellent basic salary plus generous bonus scheme, ongoing training and career development, five weeks' annual leave, contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period) and all the benefits of working for a large media organisation.

Please apply in writing with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

Ynez Coton, Commercial Director,
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA
Apple Barn, Hythe Rd, Smeeth, Ashford Kent. TN25 6SS
Or email ynez.coton@kosmedia.co.uk

Sales Manager

The Sales Manager will play a lead role in developing new business and maintaining existing relationships. The ideal candidate should be comfortable with all stages of client relationship management and should be proficient at sourcing leads, securing new revenue, delivering presentations, writing proposals, negotiating and closing.

The person we are seeking will be an energetic and enthusiastic individual with excellent sales skills, a self starter; highly motivated and will have excellent verbal and written communication ability. You will need to demonstrate a proven sales track record, preferably from within media, will have a good understanding of the benefits of printed, online and live media and knowledge of the Kent marketplace would be useful.

Media Sales Executives Tunbridge Wells

KOS Media look for highly motivated people to create and sell multi-media solutions in our market leading portfolio including newspapers, magazines and digital sales.

We believe and pride ourselves in good customer service, professional marketing solutions and excellent business relationships. We provide innovative ideas that will in return give our clients real value and response.

Looking after and growing an existing customer base along with finding new business will form the basis of the job role. You will need to be a self motivated individual with sales experience, good communicator, tenacious and hard working to succeed in this environment.

Telephone Sales Executives x2 Ashford

You will play the key role in selling advertising across our market leading portfolio of newspapers, websites and mobile products.

Candidates may possess a track record in telephone sales, combining excellent communication skills, tenacity and the ability to build relationships.

Ultimately, we need an articulate and assured sales person with a structured and positive manner. You might also be looking to enter media as a career within sale and this would be an excellent starting point.

We offer an excellent basic salary plus generous bonus scheme, ongoing training and career development, five weeks' annual leave, contributory pension and life assurance scheme (after qualifying period) and all the benefits of working for a large media organisation.

Please apply with your CV and covering letter in the first instance to:

Christine Davidson, Commercial Director
ARCHANT KOS MEDIA,
Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS
Or by email christine.davidson@kosmedia.co.uk

ARCHANT KOS MEDIA



Public Sector

You can also find the latest jobs online: www.jobsforkent.co.uk

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Telephone: 01303 817040

Fax: 01303 817004

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Teachers Needed Primary, Secondary and SEN.

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To find out more information and to register with us, please call us free on: **0800 731 6871**

or email enquiry.ers@capita.co.uk

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Whether you require daily, short term, long term or permanent roles across Kent and the SE we would love to hear from you.

To find out more information and to register with us, please call us on: **0845 450 1496** or email: kentteam@tltp.co.uk



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“Raising Aspirations, Developing Skills, Delivering Quality”

Do you have what it takes to be a College Governor?

Thanet College continues to build on the success and achievement of its students in a wide range of vocational courses, specialising in areas such as art and design, music, media and performance, engineering and technology, hospitality, care and business.

College Governors are members of the wide community served by the College who volunteer their senior level experience and skills for public benefit. They are responsible for the educational character and mission of the College, for the proper use of its resources and for safeguarding its assets. Governors are committed to the value of lifelong learning, the promotion of equal opportunities and maintaining standards.

We have a vacancy for a Governor serving on our Governing Body and Audit Committee. The successful applicant should have broad managerial experience and knowledge of organisations at a senior level and be conversant with financial procedures and/or audit processes.

Please apply in writing to:

Nicky Stevenson
Deputy Clerk
Thanet College
Ramsgate Road
Broadstairs
Kent CT10 1PN

The closing date for applicants is Monday 14th February 2011.

Please note: Previous applicants need not apply

Thanet College is committed to Equal Opportunities.

THANET COLLEGE

RAISING ASPIRATIONS - DEVELOPING SKILLS - DELIVERING QUALITY

Additional Support Tutor

The college is looking to recruit an Additional Support Tutor to be responsible for the support service for learners with Autistic Spectrum Condition and Language and Communication needs.

Salary Scale: £25,589 - £30,205 for 37 hours per week, all year

Closing date: 9 February 2011

Interview date: 28 February 2011

For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on 'Vacancies'.

Alternatively contact the HR Office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application line for an application pack on (01843) 605052

Job reference: AST001

Promoting Equality Preventing Discrimination

THE SPENCER WING

The Spencer Wing is the independently owned and managed 22 bed private hospital situated on the QEOM Hospital site. We also have a 4 bed unit at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. The continuing growth of our business has resulted in vacancies for the following staff:

PART-TIME RECEPTIONIST/ADMINISTRATOR (Margate)
20 hours per week (shifts between 7.30am – 08.00pm)
Closing date for applications –4th February 2011

Qualifications
Maths and English (GCSE or equivalent) 2 years working with the public
Knowledge of Word, IT Skills, Booking Systems. Flexible approach to working

To discuss these opportunities or to arrange an informal visit, please contact
Caroline McSkeane, Outpatient Administration Supervisor on 01843 234555 Ext: 62044

For job description and application form please contact:
Jo Edwards, East Kent Medical Services Ltd, The Spencer Wing
QEOM Hospital, Ramsgate Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4BG
Telephone: 01843 234556 Fax: 01843 296333
E-mail: jo.edwards@thespencerwing.com

The Spencer Wing is an equal opportunity employer

These positions are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure check

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censusapplications@jobsforkent.co.uk
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Royal Naval Benevolent Trust

RGN's (Day and Night shifts)

Gillingham
Salary Negotiable
Prestigious Naval Care Home in Gillingham
Requires: RGN's (Day and Night shifts) Applicants should be able to provide a high standard of nursing care and work as part of a team. For more information and application form contact: PEMBROKE HOUSE11 Oxford Road Gillingham Kent ME7 4BS Tel: 01634 852431.
To apply/more information:
RoyalNavalBenevolentTrust.jotrembeth@pembrokehouse-rnbt.org.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

To advertise in this section **01303 817040**



THANET COLLEGE
RAISING ASPIRATIONS - DEVELOPING SKILLS - DELIVERING QUALITY

Trainer/Assessor in Health & Social Care

A Trainer/Assessor is required to work at the college's brand new Business Centre in Manston.

The successful applicant will be required to:

- Assess and track a caseload of learners for Employer Responsive provision in a variety of environments towards timely completion
- Carry out Internally Verification
- Prepare and deliver group training for customised and accredited programmes
- Contribute to resource development and implement new programmes as necessary under the direction of the Sector Lead
- Promote the Business Centre / Sector, recruiting new candidates primarily from existing employer contacts.

Salary Scale: £19,000 - £23,000 plus Achievement Incentives up to £3K, 37 hours, all year

Closing date: 31 January 2010

Interview date: 8 February 2011

For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on 'Vacancies'. Alternatively contact the HR Office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application line for an application pack on (01843) 605052

Promoting Equality Preventing Discrimination



Westlands Academies Trust



The Westlands School

Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

SITE MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN/CARETAKER

The successful applicant will work as a member of the Site Maintenance team, line-managed by the Site Manager. As well as general caretaking duties, the successful applicant will be expected to undertake site maintenance, and so a working knowledge and experience with carpentry, electrics, plumbing and decorating is desirable.

37 hours a week. Extra payments will be made to cover any out-of-hours lettings during evenings and weekends and for weekend/Bank Holiday standby duty, all of which are carried out on a mandatory, shared rota basis.

Applicants must be prepared to work a variety of hours as and when required.

Kent Pay Band 3 £14,099 - £15,984

Recruitment packs are available from the school or online. Please note, we cannot accept CVs without an application form.

Closing date: Monday 31st January 2011

Westlands Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email: swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher:
Mr J Whitcombe MA

Westlands Academies Trust
Company No 7344732



PUBLIC NOTICE

Highways – District of Swale

HEARTS DELIGHT ROAD, TUNSTALL (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is given that because of the installation of a new electrical supply, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Hearts Delight Road, Tunstall, on or after 21 February 2011 for up to 1 day or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed in the vicinity of 'The Oast'. There will be no access for through traffic between the junctions with Bredgar Road and Park Drive.

The alternative route is via Hearts Delight Road, Hearts Delight, Bannister Hill, Borden Lane, Riddles Road, Minterne Avenue, Bradley Drive, Park Drive and Tunstall Road.

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116 STOPPING UP OF LAND ADJACENT TO BYSING WOOD ROAD AND WESTERN LINK (B2045), FAVERSHAM


I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT the Kent County Council propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Sittingbourne Magistrates Court on 7 March 2011 at 11.30am for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land adjacent to Bysing Wood Road and Western Link (B2045), Faversham as shown in red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of this notice and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of Kent Highway Services at Sessions, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Network Performance of Kent Highway Services in writing at the address given below, or by telephone on 08458 247 800 (24 hour contact centre).

KATHERINE KERSWELL
GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR
County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XX

For further information please contact Kent Highway services on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways



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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE (LICENSING ACT 2003)

Take notice that Sellathurai Mahadevan Biriithivirajah has applied to Medway Council under the Licensing Act 2003 for a new premises licence in respect of the premises known as Best One, 4 Admirals Walk, Chatham, ME5 8NL. A brief description of the proposed licence is as follows: The sale of alcohol Monday-Sunday from 0800-2300 hours. Full details of the application are held and can be inspected at the Licensing Authority, Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Rd, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR. Interested parties or responsible authorities can make written representations to the Licensing Authority in writing by the 17th February 2011 at the address above. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application and the maximum fine on summary conviction is £5,000.

Application submitted by:
Licensing Matters Ltd (01282 684537)

PUBLIC NOTICE LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice of application for the variation of a premises licence

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an application has been made to the licensing authority of Maidstone Borough Council for the variation of a premises licence under section 34 of the Licensing Act 2003

Details of the application are as follows:
Name of Applicant: Mytime Active
Postal address of premises: Cobtree Golf Course, Chatham Road, Sandling, Maidstone, ME14 3AZ

Brief description of proposed variation to premises licence: To extend Permitted Hours to 00.30hrs for Supply of Alcohol Mon-Sat & remove conditions section under 'Children' from embedded conditions. Entertainment Mon-Sat.

Any responsible authority or interested party wishing to make representations on this matter must submit those representations in writing to: The Licensing Team,

Maidstone Borough Council PO Box 1255 MAIDSTONE ME14 9LT by no later than 28 days from the date of this notice.

ANY REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE NOTIFIED TO THE APPLICANT AND WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE LICENSING AUTHORITY

Please note that it is an offence knowingly or recklessly making a false statement in connection with an application and, on summary conviction for the offence, a person is liable to a fine not exceeding level five on the standard scale (currently £5,000)

Signed: B Thompson Dated: 14/01/11

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) ORDER 1995
NOTICE OF THE CONFIRMATION OF A DIRECTION UNDER ARTICLE 4(1) TO WHICH ARTICLE 6 APPLIES

NOTICE is hereby given that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council ("the Authority") has confirmed a Direction made under Article 4(1) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 to which Article 6 applies ("the Direction").

The Direction applies to development of the type specified in the First Schedule to this Notice within the area described in the Second Schedule to this Notice.

The effect of the Direction is that permission granted by article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 shall not apply to development of the type specified in the First Schedule to this Notice and that such development shall not be carried out within the area specified in the Second Schedule to this Notice unless planning permission is granted by the Authority on an application made to the Authority under Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

A copy of the Direction and of the map defining the area of land covered by it may be seen at the Council's Tunbridge Wells Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2AB between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday (except Thursday 9am to 6.30pm) or 10am and 4pm on Saturday.

The Direction was made by the Authority on 13 December 2010 and came into force in relation to the area specified in the Second Schedule to this Notice on the 18 December 2010. The Direction was confirmed on 24 January 2011 and remains in force in relation to the area specified in the Second Schedule to this Notice.


FIRST SCHEDULE
The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995

SCHEDULE 2 PART 2 - MINOR OPERATIONS
Class A
The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure.

SCHEDULE 2 PART 4 - TEMPORARY BUILDINGS AND USES
Class B
The use of the land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year, of which not more than 14 days in total may be for the purposes referred to in paragraph B.2, and the provision on the land of any movable structure for the purpose of the permitted use.

SECOND SCHEDULE
A parcel of land having an area of some 6.372722 hectares to the south east of Chieveley Drive, Hawkenbury Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Paul Cummins, Legal Services Manager,
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council,
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1RS
Dated: 29 January 2011



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Driving

www.carsforkent.co.uk



More upmarket focus with the latest Focus

FORD launches its third generation Focus in March with clear intent to take the UK's best-selling family hatchback upmarket.

And there could be no better way to celebrate the firm's 100 years in Britain, than production of what is tipped to be the sharpest Focus since the original mould-breaker arrived in 1998.

That car arrived as a replacement for the long-running and increasingly tired Escort; indeed, I have written before about the complacency and market over-dominance shown by Ford in wringing out year after year of warmed over technology and

By **STEVE LOADER**

design in those latter day Escort models.

But even Ford recognised it had to do something eventually and, having buried the credibility of the once proud Escort name under years of mediocrity, it came up with an apt name for its successor; the Focus showed real concentration on ground-breaking looks, interior design and driver appeal.

Unfortunately, there was a relapse when the Mark II version came out in 2004. It was a fine car in terms of build and driveability, but the styling was a let down after the radical approach of its predecessor.

Fortunately, the all-new car arriving soon

marks a return to the bravery of the Mark I and if the five-door and estate models available at launch are anything to go by, we need to start getting excited now about what the three-door 'sporting version' will look like when that arrives later.

The crisply-styled Mark III (from £15,995) will also cut a dash against its arch-rivals, the Vauxhall Astra and VW Golf: the former is another stylish contender, while the latter is a stunning piece of technology with big car levels of refinement, but it's pretty average to look at.

Nor will the new Focus concede ground technologically; it has been developed in Europe for global sales – major recognition that British and European consumers have the most sophisticated motoring demands.

The car's platform will eventually underpin at least 10 vehicles around the world and account for two million units of annual production by 2012.

The powertrain options at launch for the UK also reflect a demanding market; the fight back by petrol is highlighted by Ford's sophisticated new turbocharged low emission 1.6-litre EcoBoost unit and completely updated 1.6 and 2.0-litre Duratorq TDCi diesels

Both 1.6 engines will also have Auto-Start-Stop as standard to cut consumption and emissions in heavy traffic conditions – Focus CO2 emissions start at 109g/km.



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Ibiza

1.4 Sport 3-Door Hatchback 2010

from **£9,295**
on the road

was £12,570
now **£9,295**
save **£3,275**



Altea

1.9 TDI S 5-Door Hatchback 2010

from **£12,995**
on the road

was £16,190
now **£12,995**
save **£3,195**



Leon

1.9 TDI S 90PS 5-Door Hatchback 2010

from **£11,795**
on the road

was £15,590
now **£11,795**
save **£3,795**



Exeo

ST 2.0 TDI SE CRDI 5-Door Estate 2010

from **£16,995**
on the road

was £22,265
now **£16,995**
save **£5,270**



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SEAT

10 60 SEAT Exeo ST 2.0 TDi SE Tech 5-door Estate in Black Magic. 3,500 miles. Was: £23,160 **Now: £18,995** Save £4,165!

10 10 SEAT Exeo ST 2.0 TDi SE CRDi 5-door Estate in Silver. 4,500 miles. Was: £22,265 **Now: £16,995** Save £5,270!

10 60 SEAT Leon 1.6 TDi CR Emocion 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 1,500 miles. Was: £18,020 **Now: £14,895** Save £3,125!

10 10 SEAT Altea 1.6 SE TDi CR Ecomotive 5-door MPV in Planeta Blue. 9,500 miles. Was: £18,980 **Now: £13,695** Save £5,285!

10 60 SEAT Altea 1.9 TDi S 5-door Hatchback in Track Grey. 3,000 miles. Was: £16,190 **Now: £12,995** Save £3,195!

10 10 SEAT Leon 1.9 TDi S 90 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 2,500 miles. Was: £15,590 **Now: £12,795** Save £2,795!

10 10 SEAT Leon 1.9 TDi S 5-door Hatchback in Nayara Blue. 4,500 miles. Was: £15,590 **Now: £12,295** Save £3,295!

10 10 SEAT Ibiza 1.6 TDi CR Sport 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 5,500 miles. Was: £15,000 **Now: £11,995** Save £3,005!

10 10 SEAT Leon 1.9 TDi S 90PS 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 5,000 miles. Was: £15,590 **Now: £11,795** Save £3,795!

10 60 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Good Stuff 5-door Hatchback in Black Magic. 2,000 miles. Was: £13,495 **Now: £10,995** Save £2,500!

10 60 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Good Stuff 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 3,000 miles. Was: £13,495 **Now: £10,995** Save £2,500!

10 60 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Good Stuff 5-door Hatchback in Emocion Red. 3,500 miles. Was: £13,095 **Now: £10,695** Save £2,400!

07 07 SEAT Leon 2.0 FR TSi 200PS 5-door Hatchback in Black Magic Metallic. 34,500 miles. Was: £10,995 **Now: £10,495** Save £500!

10 60 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 SE 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 2,000 miles. Was: £12,650 **Now: £10,395** Save £2,255!

07 57 SEAT Leon 1.9 TDi Stylance 5-door Hatchback in Zenith Grey Metallic. 29,000 miles. Was: £9,995 **Now: £9,495** Save £500!

10 10 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Sport 3-door Hatchback in Emocion Red. 4,000 miles. Was: £12,570 **Now: £9,295** Save £3,275!

08 58 SEAT Leon 1.6 Emocion 5-door Hatchback in Emocion Red. 10,000 miles. Was: £9,795 **Now: £9,295** Save £500!

08 58 SEAT Leon 1.6 Emocion 5-door Hatchback in Crono Yellow. 21,000 miles. Was: £9,495 **Now: £9,195** Save £300!

07 07 SEAT Leon 1.9 TDi Stylance 5-door Hatchback in Black Magic Metallic. 37,500 miles. Was: £9,295 **Now: £8,995** Save £300!

08 58 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 16V SE 85PS 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey. 17,500 miles. £8,295

07 07 SEAT Leon 1.9 TDi PD Stylance 5-door Hatchback in Luna Grey Metallic 54,561 miles. £7,995

08 58 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 SE 5-door Hatchback in Black. 19,000 miles. £7,995

08 08 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Sportrider 5-door Hatchback in Zenith Grey. 17,000 miles. £6,895

07 56 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Stylance 3-door Hatchback in Luna Grey, Automatic 17,000 miles. £5,795

04 54 SEAT Toledo 1.9 TDi S 110 BHP 4-door Saloon in Lava Grey Metallic. 75,000 miles. **SOLD**

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05 05 BMW Z4 3.0i SE 2-door Roadster/Convertible Tiptronic in Maldives Blue. 13,500 miles. £16,750

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07 07 Vauxhall Vectra 1.9 CTDi Exclusive 5-door Hatchback Automatic/Tiptronic in Silver. 31,000 miles. Was: £8,295 **Now: £7,795** Save £500!

08 57 Skoda Octavia 1.6 FSi Classic 5-door Hatchback in Gold Metallic. 23,600 miles. Was: £7,995 **Now: £7,295** Save £700!

07 07 Renault Clio 1.4 Dynamique 5-door Hatchback in Mercury Metallic. 24,500 miles. Was: £7,295 **Now: £6,995** Save £300!

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07 07 Renault Modus 1.4 16V Dynamique 5-door Hatchback in Antique Green. 10,800 miles. Was: £6,995 **Now: £6,295** Save £700!

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07 57 Ford Fusion 1.4 Style Climate 5-door Hatchback Automatic in Tonic Blue. 17,500 miles. £5,995

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53 Plate. Skoda Fabia 1.2 Comfort 5-Dr Hatchback

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Finished in Nighthawk Black, 48,500 miles. £5,795

56 Plate. Honda Jazz 1.4i-DSI SE 5-Door Hatchback

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CORSA SELECTION	08 08 ASTRA 1.4 BREEZE SDR, Ultra Blue, 34,850 miles, £6995 £6695	10 10 INSIGNIA 2.0 CDTi EXCLUSIVE SDR, Black Sapphire, 10,180 miles, £14995 £14475
07 07 CORSA 1.0 LIFE A/C SDR, Flame Red, 42,500 miles, £5395 £4995	08 08 ASTRA 1.8 SRI X PACK SDR, Silver Lightning, 15,870 miles, £8495 £7995	VECTRA SELECTION
07 57 CORSA 1.2 DESIGN SDR, Flame Red, 49,370 miles, £6495 £5995	08 09 ASTRA 1.4 SXI SPORTS HATCH SDR, Red, 16,900 miles, £8995 £8695	08 58 VECTRA 2.2 DESIGN SDR, Ultra Blue, 20,345 miles, £7995 £7600
07 57 CORSA 1.2 SXI A/C SDR, Star Silver, 96,35 miles, £6795 £6500	09 59 ASTRA 1.8 SPORTS TWIN TOP 2DR, Air Blue, 3,320 miles, £14995 £11995	DUE SOON SELECTION
08 57 CORSA 1.6 VXR SDR, Arden Blue, 23,500 miles, £9995 £9635	09 59 ASTRA 1.4 ACTIVE SPORTS HATCH SDR, Sovereign Silver, 8,040 miles, £9995 £9600	06 06 MERIVA 1.7 CDTi DESIGN SDR, Star Silver, 20,000 miles, £5995 £4995
08 08 CORSA 1.2 BREEZE + 3DR, Silver Lightning, 16,300 miles, £7495	10 59 ASTRA 2.0 VXR SDR, Arden Blue, 5,660 miles, £16995 £15995	06 55 ASTRA 1.6 SXI SDR, Moonland, 62,800 miles, £4995 £4995
08 08 CORSA 1.3 CDTi BREEZE SDR, Lightning Silver, 24,590 miles, £7995 £7495	10 10 ASTRA 1.6 ACTIVE SDR, Star Silver, 5,010 miles, £11495 £9995	07 57 ASTRA 1.8 ELITE SDR, Star Silver, 19,000 miles, £7495
08 08 CORSA 1.3 CDTi BREEZE SDR, Flame Red, 41,275 miles, £7295 £6995	10 10 ASTRA 1.8 SRI X PACK SDR, Black Sapphire, 3,330 miles, £13995 £11995	08 57 ASTRA 1.4 SXI SDR, Flame Red, 30,200 miles, £7495
08 08 CORSA 1.3 CDTi BREEZE+ 3DR, Flame Red, 16,355 miles, £7495 £7150	10 10 NEW ASTRA 1.7 CDTi SRI SDR, Black Sapphire, 3,490 miles, £18995 £17995	09 59 INSIGNIA 2.0 SRI 4X4 SDR, Black Sapphire, 7,500 miles, £15495
08 58 CORSA 1.3 SXI CDTi A/C SDR, Silver Lightning, 16,300 miles, £7495 £7275	10 10 NEW ASTRA 1.7 CDTi SRI SDR, Power Red, 4,800 miles, £15995 £14995	COMMERCIALS SELECTION
09 59 CORSA 1.0 ACTIVE SDR, Flame Red, 4,000 miles, £7995 £7795	10 10 ASTRA 1.6 EXCLUSIVE AUTO SDR, Silver Lake, 1,100 miles, £14995 £12995	10 10 COMBO 1.3 CDTi SDR, White, 17,005 miles, £7995+VAT £7495+VAT
09 59 CORSA 1.2 ACTIVE SDR, Star Silver, 7,880 miles, £8995 £7995	10 10 NEW ASTRA 1.4 EXCLUSIVE SDR, Iceberg Blue, 3,000 miles, £12995 £11495	10 10 COMBO VAN 1.2 SDR, Ultra Blue, 48,450 miles, £8995+VAT £8495+VAT
10 59 CORSA 1.3 CDTi ACTIVE SDR, 7750 miles, Black Sapphire, 4,925 miles, £10495 £10295	10 10 ASTRA 1.4 EXCLUSIVE SDR, Iceberg Blue, 3,000 miles, £12995 £11495	10 10 ASTRA 1.7 CDTi SPORTIVE SDR, Sovereign Silver, Del Miles, £8995+VAT £8495+VAT
10 10 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY 1.2 SDR, Black Sapphire, 2,340 miles, £9995 £9495	10 10 ASTRA 1.4 SPORT SPORTS HATCH SDR, Power Red, 2,065 miles, £11995 £10995	10 10 NEW MOVANO 2.3 SDR, Halo Silver, Del Miles, £7995+VAT £16995+VAT
10 10 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Silver Lightning, 2,045 miles, £8995 £8750	10 10 NEW ASTRA 1.6 EXCLUSIVE SDR, Black Sapphire, 2,210 miles, £13995 £11975	10 10 VIVARO LWB 2.0 SDR, Glacier White, 7350 miles, £11995+VAT £11495+VAT
10 10 CORSA 1.3 CDTi ENERGY SDR, Glacier White, 2,800 miles, £10995 £10395	MERIVA SELECTION	10 10 VIVARO 2.0 DOUBLE CAB SPORTIVE SDR, Star Silver, 2,370 miles, £14995+VAT £13995+VAT
10 10 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Metro Blue, 2,925 miles, £9995 £9495	06 06 MERIVA 1.7 CDTi DESIGN SDR, Star Silver, 28,000 miles, £5995	NON NETWORK Q SELECTION
10 10 CORSA 1.4 SE SDR, Beach Green, 4,740 miles, £10995 £10495	07 57 MERIVA 1.4 ENERGY SDR, Star Silver, 31,000 miles, £6495 £6250	02 02 CORSA 1.0 SE SDR, Flame Red, 49,065 miles, £2795 £2500
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10 10 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Silver Lake, Del Miles, £9495 £8995	10 10 ZAFIRA SELECTION	05 55 CORSA 1.2 SXI A/C SDR, Ultra Blue, 48,450 miles, £3995 £3750
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10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Metro Blue, Del Miles, £9795	09 59 ZAFIRA 1.9 CDTi DESIGN SDR, Panacotta, 5,675 miles, £17495 £13995	05 55 ASTRA 1.6 DESIGN ESTATE SDR, Star Silver, 11,325 miles, £3295 £2995
10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Metro Blue, Del Miles, £9795	10 10 ZAFIRA 1.8 ENERGY SDR, Sovereign Silver, 1570 miles, £13995 £12995	06 55 ASTRA 1.6 SXI SDR, Black Sapphire, 55,800 miles, £5495 £5195
10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, White, Del Miles, £9495	10 10 ZAFIRA 1.8 ENERGY SDR, Black Sapphire, 4,325 miles, £13995 £12995	03 53 ZAFIRA 1.6 CLUB SDR, Rubens Red, 55,640 miles, £3495 £3195
10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, White, Del Miles, £9495	10 10 ZAFIRA 1.6 LIFE A/C SDR, Ultra Blue, 4,690 miles, £12995 £11995	07 07 ZAFIRA 1.6 ENERGY SDR, Silver Lightning, 63,520 miles, £5995 £5650
10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Metro Blue, Del Miles, £9795	10 10 ZAFIRA 1.7 CDTi ENERGY SDR, Star Silver, 2,990 miles, £14995 £14695	06 06 MITSUBISHI LANCER 1.6 4DR, Grey, 52,825 miles, £3995 £3695
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10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, White, Del Miles, £9495	09 09 INSIGNIA 1.8 EXCLUSIVE PLUS PACK SDR, Sovereign Black, 11,400 miles, £11495 £10995	05 55 PEUGEOT 206 CC ALLURE 1.6, Blue, 35,000 miles, £5995 £5495
10 60 CORSA 1.2 ENERGY SDR, Metro Blue, Del Miles, £9995		05 55 PEUGEOT 206 VERVE 1.4 SDR, Grey, 51,725 miles, £4495 £4250

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FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Steve Loader

Corsa's blue halo



AFTER a major revamp of its Corsa supermini, Vauxhall has also created a new limited edition halo model for the line-up.

The £19,245 Corsa VXR Blue Edition undercuts key competitors like the Citroen DS3 R and the Mini Cooper Works by up to £3,600, yet comes with an arresting blue metallic paint job, 18-inch alloys and dark-tinted glass.

It also gets the more aggressive VXR front end, with deep-set fog lamps.

The blue theme continues inside on stitching to the leather-clad wheel, the interior air-vent colour and on the Recaro seats.

The VXR is powered by a lightweight turbocharged petrol 190bhp 1.6-litre engine delivering 0-60mph in 6.8 seconds.

The car also sits on lowered sports suspension, uprated brakes and a switchable Electronic Stability Programme (ESP) for extra driving entertainment.

Go for luxury with high-spec city car



UNDERLINING a regular First Gear theme that drivers may be downsizing but not giving up their luxuries, Toyota has launched a high-spec version of its Aygo city car.

The Aygo Go! (from £9,750) comes with a removable touchscreen TomTom sat nav, Bluetooth connectivity and a USB port for connecting iPods and other digital music players to the

CD/MP3 sound system.

The Go! also hits high notes visually with bespoke alloys, rear privacy glass and a leather-trimmed steering wheel, but air con adds a grand to the price.

It is available in three and five-door body styles and offered with a manual or efficient manual/auto MultiMode transmission for the 1.0-litre petrol engine.

Series of seven wins for BMW

BMW scooped seven gongs from the prestigious BusinessCar fleet contest, including the coveted headline accolade of 'Manufacturer of the Year' for the third year running.

The title 'Business Car of the Year' was awarded to the new BMW 5-Series for a combination of superior build quality, driving dynamics and class-leading economy, while 'Green Car of the Year' was landed by the ultra frugal BMW 320d EfficientDynamics.

Other awards included: 'Large 4x4 of the year' (BMW X5), 'Upper Medium Car of the Year' (BMW 3-Series for the second year), 'Executive Car of the Year' (BMW 5-Series), and 'Supermini of the Year' (BMW Mini for the ninth year).



The BusinessCar Awards are highly sought after by carmakers as the votes are cast by readers. Editor Paul Barker said of the German marque's dominant performance: "BMW's massive

achievement in providing cars that are both cost-efficient to run and desirable to staff has led to a well deserved and very impressive seven awards, including all three of the headline car awards."



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Model shown: Alfa Giulietta 1.4 TB 120bhp Turismo at £17,940 OTR including optional Ghiaccio White special paint at £490.00. Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Alfa Giulietta range: Urban 26.2 - 51.4 mpg (10.8 - 5.5 l/100km); Extra Urban 48.7 - 76.4 mpg (5.8 - 3.7 l/100km); Combined 37.2 - 64.2 mpg (7.6 - 4.4 l/100km). CO₂ emissions 177 - 114 g/km. Prices correct at time of going to press.

*On the road price includes 3 year AlfaCare Dealer warranty, 3 year AA cover, 12 months road fund licence, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and VAT. Figures are correct at time of print. Offer subject to availability, vehicles must be registered by 31st March 2011. Finance subject to status. Guarantees / indemnities may be required. Further charges may be made subject to the condition of the vehicle if the vehicle is returned at the end of the finance agreement. Alfa Romeo Financial Services, PO Box 108, Leeds, LS27 0WU.

E-Type still stunning at 50

by
STEVELOADER

JAGUAR is celebrating the 50th anniversary of one of the most famous and desirable cars in motoring history – the Jaguar E-Type.

The special birthday will be marked at headline industry events including the Geneva Motor Show where it was unveiled in 1961, Goodwood's Revival and Festival of Speed, the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, and the Nurburgring Old Timer Grand Prix, as well as Jaguar customer, dealer and lifestyle events worldwide.

The appeal of the E-Type transcended the automotive world; it was even described as a work of art – no wonder that one example of the classic now resides in New York's Museum of Modern Art.

It set new standards in automotive design and performance when it was launched and its influence is still apparent in the line-up of cars sold today by a resurgent Jaguar brand.

"Half a century of progress has not diminished the significance of the E-Type," said Jaguar MD Mike O'Driscoll.

"It was a sensation when it was launched, and remains Jaguar's most enduring and iconic symbol. The E-Type is one of the most exciting cars ever created and a legacy to the genius of Jaguar's founder, Sir William Lyons."



E-Type owners included celebrities such as George Best, Brigitte Bardot, Tony Curtis and Steve McQueen and the sports car became synonymous with the Swinging Sixties as the Beatles and the mini skirt.

"It is impossible to overstate the impact the E-Type had when it was unveiled in 1961," said Jaguar's modern day design chief Ian Callum – the man credited with re-forging the classic brand's styling with best sellers like the XF.

"Here was a car that encapsulated the spirit of the revolutionary era it came to symbolise. The E-Type is a design that even today continues to inform the work we do in styling Jaguars of the future."

The car caused a sensation when the wraps came off in Geneva in 1961; capable of achieving 150mph, but costing a fraction of the price of rivals with similar performance, it was the affordable supercar and remained on sale for 14 years to become Europe's first mass-produced sports car.

Even Enzo Ferrari admitted it was "the most beautiful car in the world".

The E-type's straight-six engine had powered Jaguar to five Le Mans victories in the 1950s. At launch the car cost £2,256 - including tax and the all-important optional wire wheels - the equivalent today of just £38,000.

The E-Type's perfectly proportioned bodywork was the work of Malcolm Sayer, an aeronautical engineer by training who also applied his aerodynamic expertise in shaping the earlier Le Mans-winning C and D-Type racers.

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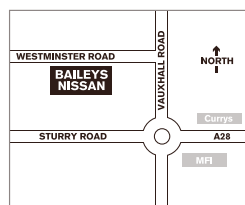


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DrivingReview



by
STEVELOADER

CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Alfa Romeo Giulietta

ALFA Romeo could rightly scream "We woz robbed" – in Italian – after seeing its quite brilliant Giulietta pipped for European Car of the Year by a toy car.

Yes, for all its technology and promise for the future, I cannot accept that the all-electric range-challenged Nissan Leaf was a worthy COTY 2011 winner, scoring 257 points against the Alfa's 248.

I felt this even more after a whirlwind week-long affair with a £20,000 Giulietta 1.4 TB MultiAir Lusso – yes, it's easy to insinuate that you are having a fling with this particular Italian.

To continue the theme, while she/it can be racy, (the) Giulietta is also a girl/car you can take home to mamma/mum.

For while Alfas used to tend towards an uncompromising demeanour – the kind that would see you excited one minute and then ducking crockery the next in a human relationship – this car is great to live with.



Part of its appeal is the standard-fit DNA system already seen on the smaller and no less exciting Alfa MiTo supermini.

Ignoring the contrived abbreviation, DNA allows the driver to switch between Dynamic, Normal and All-Weather settings that change the personality of the car through the steering, brakes, gearbox and throttle, and suspension. It means the Giulietta can be hot hatch, sporty family

motor and sober and sensible all-weather taxi.

Most of the time, you leave it in Normal, but the pulse quickens after selecting Dynamic for a sporting dash, while I proved All-Weather's effectiveness on a particularly icy morning when even a slightly leaden foot could have created problems.

And though Alfa was always feted as much for its petrol engines – including the legendary high performance twin-spark series – as its

styling, the option of sporty diesels from the Fiat association has not harmed the brand revival.

The launch range (starting at £17,450) extends from 120bhp 1.4-litre to 235bhp 1,750cc petrol units, and from 105bhp 1.6-litre to 170bhp 2.0-litre turbodiesels.

Our engine here though was the 170bhp 1.4; you can hear just enough of it to know it revs well and is smooth, and it has power options to

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Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO2 emissions (g/km). Aveo 1.4 LT 5dr: Urban - 35.8 (7.9), Extra-urban - 60.1 (4.7), Combined - 47.9 (5.9). CO2 emissions 140g/km. Captiva 2.0 VCDi LT 5-seat: Urban - 32.1 (8.8), Extra-urban - 45.6 (6.2), Combined - 39.2 (7.2). CO2 emissions 151g/km. Cruze 1.6 S 4dr: Urban - 31.4 (9.0), Extra-urban - 51.4 (5.5), Combined - 41.5 (6.8). CO2 emissions 159g/km. Spark 1.2 LT 5dr: Urban - 42.8 (6.6), Extra-urban - 67.3 (4.2), Combined - 55.4 (5.1). CO2 emissions 119g/km.



suit all moods – helped by that DNA system.

Driven normally though, it should average nearly 50mpg and it emits just 134g/km of CO2 – yet more evidence that small capacity turbocharged petrol engines can strike back at diesels though lightness and cheaper fuel at the pumps as well as increasingly competitive consumption and emissions levels.

But this is mundane stuff against an illustrious Alfa history unbowed by the weight of some dodgy times, too.

Diehards will want to know how this new

Giulietta, which carries one of the marque's most evocative model names – the 1950s/60s Giulietta Sprint was one of the most handsome cars the company has produced – stacks up against past heroes.

Pretty well and it wears a stylish take on the trademark V-shape grille, plus a coupe look enhanced by the marque's well-established trick of concealing the rear door handles within the door frames of its five-door designs.

The classy cabin might not be as hard wearing as you might expect, but I have no doubt

that Alfa's once flaky build quality is a thing of the past.

It is also a spacious car to be in, though that's not obvious to those in back, thanks to the high window sills. The boot lip also demands that bags and cases are lifted higher than normal.

But this is a car mixing character and practicality in a sector where it is increasingly hard to differentiate between competitors.

With more electric cars to come, it may also be one of the last family models you can buy before all the fun goes out of everyday driving.

DrivingPortfolio

**ALFA ROMEO GIULIETTA 1.4 TB
MULTIAIR LUSO £20,000**

Driving appeal (OUT OF FIVE)	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
How green?	★★★★★
Road tax	£110/year
Best rival	VW Golf

The Verdict

DON'T LIKE:
the high boot lip but it's no deal breaker

NOT SURE:
buyers have woken up to Alfa's spectacular revival

REALLY LIKE:
the way the Giulietta mixes traditional Italian flair with modern practicality

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by
STEVELOADER

Van sales bucking the gloomy economic trend

EXPERTS are still divided about whether Britain's economy is in recovery, but they should draw some comfort from buoyant van sales figures during 2010.

These humble and often invisible vehicles are the oil in the nation's economic machinery and registrations soared 20 per cent last year, even though our economy grew feebly and even contracted in the last quarter of 2010.

As a result of that surging demand for vans – sales came close to a 22 per cent increase in December against the same year in 2009 – the motor industry's Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) was cautiously optimistic about both truck and van sales.

A spokesman said: "During 2010 van and truck registrations posted one of the strongest annual rates of growth ever, at 15.9 per cent, as volumes started to recover from the recession.

Upbeat

"The van market rose in all but one month in 2010, boosted by better than expected business confidence and improved output from the construction sector. Truck registrations grew rapidly in the second half of 2010 and ended the year on par with 2009 levels.

"While we still have a long way to go to get volumes back to pre-recession levels, we expect more growth in 2011 and 2012."

The mood was not quite so upbeat on the auction front though, prompting Duncan Ward, general manager for commercial vehicles at BCA – which has a site at Paddock Wood – to say: "The economy is best described as fragile and we will be seeing the early effects of the VAT increase alongside continuing rising fuel costs,



LONG-LASTING: Toyota Hiace panel van has created an enviable reputation for longevity and reliability, particularly with owner/drivers. Meanwhile, the pick-up market continues to be as robust as the vehicles themselves, but harsh winters have also made the 4x4 versions (Isuzu Rodeo Denver Max pictured inset) particularly attractive

which means most small businesses will have a little less flexibility in their budgets than last year.

"Anyone looking to the SME [small to medium enterprise] sector to generate any major peaks in used van demand in the short term

is likely to be disappointed – particularly as volumes are likely to increase over the coming month."

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TOP DOG: Mitsubishi's L200 can be said to have created the UK pick-up market over the past decade



CHOICE: Isuzu has returned to the UK with a bang – its popular Rodeo offers everything from this single cab version right up to well-specified Denver Max (see front of this section)



INDESTRUCTIBLE: Top Gear failed to 'kill' the Toyota Hilux

Best pick-up lines

PICK-UPS enjoyed a meteoric rise in sales during the Noughties – volumes soared more than 300 per cent in the first four years of the decade.

The key was the offer of a four/five-seat double cab, which offered private owner/operators something that was both practical and laden with image.

Many also came with 4x4 and decent off-road-

by
SAMDAWSON

ing capability as a bonus on top of tax benefits.

The daddy of the tribe was Toyota's long-running Hilux, given legendary status by Top Gear's efforts to 'kill' one by subjecting it to crashing, burning and flooding – it survived them all.

Toyota seized upon the opportunity to create a special version called 'Invincible'.

But the long-running best-seller was Mitsubishi's L200, available in a multitude of formats, from humble single cab two-wheel drive workhorses right up to the sporty and powerful 'Warrior' and 'Animal' flagships with as much specification and bling on them as an executive car – and twice the presence.

More recently, Isuzu has returned to the UK with the Rodeo series and offering the

same range of choice as the Mitsubishi – its flagship versions wear the labels Denver and Denver Max.

Nowadays, pick-ups have far better road manners and comfort levels to go with all the on-board toys, too.

The rear load bed can also be roofed over and locked using one of the many cargo covers on the market, supplied by both dealers and independents – this feature adds hugely to the versatility of these impressive vehicles.

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White Van Man in the 21st century

by
STEVELOADER

VAN design has been revolutionised over the past decade or so.

Operators have seen economy, efficiency and flexibility soar, while drivers have enjoyed better performance, refinement and safety.

Load capacities have also widened, varying from as little as three cubic metres for a carderived courier vans, right up to a 17 cubic-metre delivery van.

Access has improved, too. Many larger vans have low floors in the driving compartment for easy access and most vehicles above the supermini class now come with at least one sliding door as standard to aid loading – many buyers also take up the option of a second 'slider'.

There is now a choice usually of side-opening twin doors or a high lift tailgate as well, while cab doors generally have a reduced opening angle, with the double benefit of making it easy for a busy driver to grab the handle to close the door



MAKING A SPLASH: The Mitsubishi Fuso Canter is one of the most versatile light commercial vehicle options currently on the market

and also avoid it swinging wide and hitting something.

On the performance front, petrol have been all but displaced by the better economy and range plus better low down pulling power of four and five-cylinder diesels.

Diesel operating benefits are then compounded by extended service periods, lower maintenance costs and longer lasting parts.

The engine's partner – the gearbox – has also undergone a change. A six-speed manual gearbox is normally the standard – a couple of cogs better than only a few years ago – but urban operators are

turning increasingly to automatic, semi-automatic or clutch-less transmissions.

These can usually be driven with manual, selection anyway, but are ideal for the stop-start traffic conditions of the town and city and can be as economical as a manual.

Van safety has also gained from the car market; along with driver's airbag and the option of passenger, side and front curtain airbags, there are active safety features including anti-lock braking (ABS), traction control (TCS), braking control (EBC) and electronic stability programme (ESP).



Fiat piling up the wins

FIAT Professional's Doblò Cargo is stacking up the awards and has not even been on the market for a year.

The latest gong is What Van? magazine's 2011 Light Van of the Year.

Editor Paul Barker said: "Smartly styled, efficient, practical and comfortable, the Doblò Cargo was a natural choice for our Light Van category winner."

Gerry Clarke, director at Fiat Professional UK said: "Our customers have told us how much they like the Doblò Cargo, and it's clear that commercial vehicle experts do, too. We're delighted with this award."

The new Doblò comes in seven forms to please a wide range of customers – Cargo, Cargo Maxi, Cargo SX, Cargo Maxi SX, Combi,

Combi Maxi and Platform Cab – and offers one petrol and three diesel power options.

DELIVERY difficulties caused by pre-Christmas snow and ice have caused many van operators to check out the Fiat Fiorino with Traction+, which uses an electronic differential lock for improved grip and control.

It works by applying brake force to the driven wheel with the lowest grip and transferring extra torque to the other, thereby delivering more grip in slippery conditions.

Aware that such vehicles may be asked to go to places that others can't, Fiat also packages Traction+ with under-engine and added body protection and a suspension raised by three centimetres, yet the total add-on price starts at just £750.

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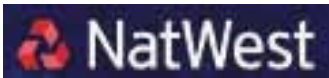
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Invicta Chamber of Commerce. And if you recall last week's comment/feature on broadband in Kent, you might like an update confirming the need for speed – businesses in a village near Canterbury could be better off faxing than emailing.

STEVE LOADER BUSINESS EDITOR
TELEPHONE: 01303 817029
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KEY PARTNERS



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Kent society beginning the conversion to OneSavings

By **STEVE LOADER**

steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

BOSSSES at the newly-created OneSavings have wasted no time in their aim to create a new force in banking.

Just days after City watchdog, the FSA (Financial Service Authority), endorsed controversial plans to spin the new organisation out of the former Kent Reliance Building Society (KRBS), the newcomer has confirmed that it plans to open seven new offices.

The move was all the more startling as KRBS chief executive Mike Lazenby had previously labelled branches as liabilities, and had slashed a 14-strong chain to just eight.

Nevertheless, he said: "We are absolutely delighted to have secured these particular agencies, which form part of our wider expansion programme. Our mission is to provide customers with affordable, competitive and efficient banking services and treat them fairly at all times – whether they choose traditional High Street-

based forms of banking or whether they deal with us directly.

"Although other banks and building societies are actively closing branches and agencies, there will always be people who want access to financial services on the High Street. We just have to be sure they are in the right places and will be well used when they are open."

Despite the creation of OneSavings, the new branches will trade as Kent Reliance, Kent Reliance Banking Services or krbs outlets. Most are in the West Country, way beyond the traditional sphere of KRBS, and a sign of the new bank's ambition.

Alliance

Its creation was not without pain, however, as some borrowers and savers battled to prevent the alliance of one of the UK's oldest building societies with a young private equity firm JC Flowers, created by American billionaire and former Goldman Sachs executive J Christopher Flowers and already known for an audacious attempt to snap up Northern Rock before its rescue by the British taxpayer in 2008.

Some society members were wary of the Flowers deal, which sees the US firm chipping

in £50million in return for gaining access to KRBS's £2.2bn worth of assets – it is Britain's 12th biggest building society.

KRBS managers countered that they had been increasingly boxed in by the mutual structure, which gave no room to expand during the economic downturn.

In any case, a majority of just over the required 75 per cent of KRBS shareholders voted in favour of transferring the society's business, assets and liabilities to OneSavings Plc, effective from February 1 – they become members of the new organisation.

The deal was duly referred to the FSA, which found no grounds to oppose it, and Mike Lazenby also told this newspaper previously: "We will continue to run as a mutual until JC Flowers owns 90 per cent of the business, which is a long way off."

"They have also agreed not to pay any dividends to their investors for the next five years, which is an incredibly long time in business."

"Five years is a long way off and a lot of things will happen before then. In the meantime we'll be going back to lending people money, which we haven't been able to do for some time, and we'll be offering some pretty good rates."

PLANNERS have been urged to be more sympathetic towards companies seeking to start up, grow and fuel the county's economic recovery, writes Steve Loader. Giles Smith, MD of GForces at Bearsted near Maidstone, has built a highly successful website design and management company over the past 10 years.

The firm now has 120 staff, almost doubling in size over the past year, and will open a major extension to its headquarters in Caring Lane later in this one.

But the go-ahead for that development has cost much wrangling and Mr Smith admitted: "It wears you down."

He added: "Kent County Council and Maidstone Council declare that they want to encourage digital businesses to the area and we are a primary example, but a two-year planning battle suggested the opposite.

"We had some great allies within the council, so maybe it's just the planning processes that are out of date. All the planning department seemed to be on our side, and some of the leaders and the economic development manager were fantastic, but it still took two years."

Asked whether it had held the company back, he said: "Yes. Absolutely. Our recruitment drive had to go on hold."

He was exasperated that it also stalled the firm's 'Academy', a partnership involving 15 local schools, colleges and universities, attempting to identify and nurture IT talent early on and save them from, and their county from losing them, to what has become known as the 'train brain drain' – careers in London.

"We wanted to show local people that you don't have to go to London, that there are companies like us who are proud to be here and be successful," added Mr Smith, who practices what he



LOOKING AHEAD: Giles Smith, of GForces, believes it is vital to keep talent in the county

Planners must halt 'train brain drain' says IT boss

preaches by running GForces with his three brothers, Tim, Jamie and Neil. All were born and raised in the Maidstone area.

"There is huge positive feedback from schools and the local education authorities about our academy and confirmation that not many companies are doing it – why not? The few organisations that are reaching out to schools are usually the banks, and you can guarantee that most 16- to 17-year-olds are asleep after

the second slide because it's not really inspiring.

"They love technology, they love the internet – they've grown up with it – so when you show them the variety of skills we are looking for, it inspires them."

"We are a commercial company, so we don't hide the fact that we do this to get the next two to four years' recruitment sorted. It's already been successful – our first two graduates are coming on full-time."

Comment

IT'S been a gloomy week, after news that the UK economy contracted by half a per cent in the final quarter of 2010. Though largely due to disruption from freezing weather, it still underlines the fragility of the recovery at a time when even grumpy pundits had predicted UK plc would mark time in Q4 2010 after a reasonably up tempo year.

The Bank's Governor, Mervyn King, didn't do much to cheer things, with a rather curmudgeonly summary of where we're at: inflation is set to gobble up wage gains and plunge us into the worst fall in our standard of living since the Great Depression.

It was rounded off with fatherly advice like that given to teenagers holding their heads after a riotous party, along the lines of "well chaps you had your fun - now you have to pay for it."

Happy days...

Still, I was cheered at least by an encounter with the youthful boss of a Kent company who is not only this week's Big Interview subject, but also delivered a Business Week front page story and considerable food for thought.

Giles Smith started GForces in Bearsted on a shoestring; the web firm now dominates its chosen sector and is hungry for international expansion.

Not only did he beat the drum for Kent, hanging on to and nurturing young talent - after catching 'em young too - but also delivered tangible proof that well-plotted technology has the power to deliver growth and progress.

I've often suggested that while Kent and the UK's traditional industries and our discredited financial sector struggle to get the economy on the move, IT can deliver more of the economies and efficiencies needed to oil the wheels of recovery.

As Giles points out, good results come from continually reviewing progress and strategy. In GForces' case, it means setting up a client's website is only part of the answer; it then has to be marketed and managed properly.

That could be a parable for reviving UK plc.

BUSINESS EDITOR STEVE LOADER

Virgin boss drops bomb on Boris Island scheme

By **NICK AMES**

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ONE of the world's leading airline bosses has voiced his opposition to 'Boris Island' off the Kent coast.

Steve Ridgeway, who has run Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic for 13 years, said plans by Mayor of London Boris Johnson to reclaim land to create a new airport close to Medway were "just not do-able".

The knockback comes after Mr Johnson hinted that the Government was warming to his controversial proposals for the £40 billion project.

Virgin chief executive Mr Ridgeway said the new airport would be on the wrong side of the capital and, while Hong Kong had set a successful precedent for such a development, the South East was too congested.

But he added: "We certainly back the debate about 'What is UK Ltd going to do about airport capacity and the long-term economic performance of the economy?'"

Mr Ridgeway's comments are the most critical so far by a senior airline industry figure since the launch of the plan, seen by Mr Johnson as an alternative to expanding operations and capacity at Heathrow.

Prime Minister David Cameron promised last October that the Coalition had no plans to build a new airport anywhere in Kent, but the mayor insists the Government position is shifting and told Radio 4's Today programme on Tuesday: "It's crazy, I think, to

have another 200,000 air traffic movements over the skies of London coming to an airport in the western suburbs. I don't think the people of London will wear it."

Both Kent County Council leader Cllr Paul Carter and Medway Council leader Cllr Rodney Chambers have now called on the mayor to make his position clear.

Cllr Chambers revealed that the deputy chairman of Transport for London, Daniel Moylan, had paid a visit to Medway before Christmas in an attempt to win support for the estuary scheme.

Cllr Chambers said: "He asked me in this meeting if we would agree to an airport in the estuary if all the infrastructure for it - such as new train lines and roads - was based in Essex and not Kent."

"I responded that we in Medway could not comment on what should or should not happen in Essex, and reaffirmed the opinion of all at Medway Council, and the vast majority of people in Kent, that the mayor's island airport scheme is unnecessary, unworkable and unaffordable."

Meanwhile, the RSPB has reiterated its opposition to the scheme, describing it as a "pipe dream".

South East director Chris Corrigan said: "I'm sure the mayor doesn't want to go down in history as the man who decimated not just birds in the Thames, but global species too, while putting air passengers' lives at risk due to bird strike."

"I'd urge him to drop this costly pursuit now and look to further strengthening, greening and improving London's public transport systems."



CRASH LANDING? Boris Island plans

Phasing out retirement age of 65

By **NEIL EMERY**
Whitehead Monckton
solicitors

CHANGES to the law on retirement are expected to come into force from March 31.

Since October 1, 2006, when the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 came into effect, it has been unlawful for employers to discriminate against employees on the grounds of age. The regulations also provided for a national default retirement age of 65, below which an employee could not be compulsorily retired (unless a lower age could be objectively justified).

Subject to complying with the requirement to provide between 6 and 12 months' notice of an intended retirement date, an employer has been able to retire an employee who has reached the age of 65, even if the employee does not wish to do so. In such circumstances, an employee would be unable to claim age discrimination or unfair dismissal.

Notification

But the Government's proposals are to abolish the default retirement age with effect from October 1, 2011, meaning that from March 31, 2011, it will no longer be possible for employers to provide employees with the minimum six months' notice of an intended retirement date.

After March 31, employers will not be permitted to issue new notifications of retirement on the basis of the default retirement age and after October 1, it will not be possible to retire employees compulsorily on the basis of the default retirement age - even if the notice of retirement was given before March 31.

Employers will still technically be permitted to have compulsory retirement ages, but they will need to justify them objectively, and the circumstances for this are likely to be extremely limited.

In practice, unless an employee is fairly dismissed on the grounds of, for example, capability, misconduct or redundancy, or there is an objective justification for an employer having a retirement age, most employees will have the right to continue working indefinitely, and irrespective of their age.



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■ LOBBYING by the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) is expected to see the Government relaxing powers allowing councils to seize homes left empty for more than six months.

Ministers are now proposing to extend the period to two years, leading CLA regional director Rupert Ashby to say: "This is an excellent example of strong CLA lobbying paying off to improve a bad law that was clearly unjust to property-owners."

"Owners can rest assured that there is less scope now for state interference with the management of their properties."

■ MARKETING and media agency Big Plan Group, of Maidstone and Canterbury, has appointed Colin North to its board.

It marks a return to Kent for him after three years as station director with Tindle Radio/Channel 103 on the Channel Islands. He spent the previous eight years within the sales, promotion and production sectors of Invicta Radio – now Heart.

He was welcomed to the board by Big Plan director Penny Williams, who added: "The business is set to expand rapidly and we now have a fantastic team in place to realise the potential of providing media and event management to businesses in Kent."

■ MEDWAY has a new accountancy business – Accounting Express.

It has been set up by Chatham-based businessman and chartered accountant, Philip Matthewman and aims to offer a low-cost book keeping and accountancy service, devised to help small businesses.

It will itself be based in a hub for smaller firms and start-ups: The Joiners Shop, within Chatham Historic Dockyard. Accounting Express is a franchised subsidiary of Sollertia Limited and the Medway arm is the fourth site it has opened in the UK.

■ VISIT Kent – the county's tourism champion – has hosted the influential Group Travel Organisers Association (GTOA) National Conference and AGM for the first time.

It gave Visit Kent the chance to show members of the travel industry what the county has to offer. After the conference at Ashford International Hotel, delegates visited one of Kent's most beautiful and interesting houses, Penshurst Place, Tonbridge, which was opened exclusively for their visit.

'Not spot' shows Kent broadband plans need boost

By STEVE LOADER

steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

BROADBAND speed is seen as vital to energising the county's economy.

So the revelation that the UK's slowest connection is not to be found in a crofter's hut on a Scottish moor, but near Canterbury, came as a major shock.

It means that anyone trying to run a business from Railway Hill in Barham, could find it faster to fax than send messages digitally, thanks to an average download speed of 0.13Mb/sec.

It certainly doesn't compare well with the UK average of 6.21Mb, according to the Top10.com website, where director Alex Buttle said: "With average download speeds only marginally faster than dial-up, Railway Hill in Kent has really hit the buffers."

Unacceptable

"Given that we're now in 2011 and elsewhere in the country people are enjoying download speeds in the high double digits, this is simply unacceptable and reinforces the broadband lottery in the UK."

Rural watchdog the Country Land and Business Association (CLA) was also unimpressed. Regional director Rupert Ashby said: "This is not just a problem in the back of beyond. Many areas just outside the South East's major towns, such as Barham, where small businesses should thrive, suffer from hopelessly inadequate broadband speeds."

He added that the CLA realised cash was tight, but rural businesses were unable to compete with urban rivals, which typically enjoyed 6Mb and more.

It wants to see a £530 million private-public partnership to bring all broadband users up to a minimum 2Mb as well as setting up a new superfast broadband, and

also champions a "Final Third First" policy, promoting provision of decent broadband connections for rural "not spots" and areas with slow connections before speeding up broadband for others.

The CLA's stance accords with a groundbreaking project in Cornwall, where the county council formed a £132m partnership with BT to create a superfast 100Mb network by 2014, albeit with some EU cash.

It also follows hard on a feature we ran in Business Week, which asked whether Britain and Kent were, literally, making the right connections on broadband strategy.

However, Kent County Council cabinet member for Corporate Support Services, Roger Gough, argued that the Railway Hill figures were misleading. "Residents in Barham now have an alternative option after Kent County Council supported them with a (£50,000) community broadband grant in 2009. The grant funded a wireless broadband service, supplied by local company VFast, which contractually gives speed of 10Mbps and even higher speeds in practice.

"We understand just how important access



to broadband is for our communities and local businesses, which is why we're working to increase access across the county.

"Often it is down to market forces to make a case for providers to install faster speeds.

"To reduce the number of 'not spots', we have provided money from our community broadband grant, which communities can bid for and part-fund business cases for broadband providers to install fixed broadband services.

"We have so far made £667,000 available, with a further £100,000 being made available this financial year. In total, this has benefitted more than 11,000 homes and businesses, and 17 communities.

"We will soon be making a further £1.5 million available for community broadband pilots and we will be lobbying providers for faster connection speeds across the county as part of our Connecting Kent Digital Strategy."



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MoCo accelerates its '3' broadband service

MOCO has announced the successful creation of a portal enabling speedy and cost-effective first-time connection for subscribers to the '3' mobile broadband system.

Before this development, new customers for the '3' service – the market-leading broadband dongle network – faced the potential bottleneck of contacting a call centre to finalise connection before surfing.

Under the new process, they still have that option but most will fast track using the new MoCo system, which is also the first major project derived from the Kent-based company's acquisition last September of Sussex software house, JIT Systems.

MoCo then created its new MoCo Software Solutions division within the group headquarters in Rochester.

Richard Pilton, former JIT principal and now head of the new MoCo software arm, said: "This is what we were bought for: to develop bespoke software to streamline processes and operations.

'3' had a situation where it was running the No1 mobile broadband network and talking about the speed and ease of internet use on the move, but having to ask new customers to contact a call centre and be connected 'manually'.

"With this traffic generating 20,000 calls a month – expected to hit 25,000 a month during 2011 – there was also a call centre cost overhead for '3', which we have cut dramatically by developing this web portal.

"Most mobile broadband customers love the idea of hooking up this way – it chimes with the whole convenience of comms on the move



'3' SPIRIT: Richard Pilton says trials went smoothly

– but even diehards can still patch into the call centre if they wish, but the operators there now simply tap into our new system, speeding up connection anyway and still driving down call centre costs for '3'.

"Trials went smoothly and it's just the sort of systems integration project work that we are offering to other companies or organisations in the comms/IT industry."

Systems architect Pilton heads a team of three within MoCo Software Solutions which, he says, was created after a long and successful association between MoCo and his old partnership, JIT Systems, operating out of Brighton: "It's a cliché, but they 'liked us so much, they bought the company'."

The development enhances MoCo's pioneering record. The company was established 25 years ago, just as the first mobile networks were set up in the UK.

GForces chief the best out of

Kosmedia BUSINESS WEEK

THE BIG INTERVIEW

Setting up a website is now considered crucial to any business, but how much does any firm invest in keeping it fresh and up to date and, most importantly, ensuring that it is marketed and 'sold' to its intended audience? Not a lot is the answer on both counts – probably two good reasons why a small Kent IT firm has expanded exponentially over the past few years. It is the award-winning GForces of Bearsted, Maidstone – Business Week editor STEVE LOADER interviewed founder and MD Giles Smith.



GILES SMITH

FOR someone who has an impressive focus on where his fast-moving young company is headed, web guru Giles Smith is disarmingly frank about its first few steps.

"I set up GForces with no real idea about the internet, but just knew it was going to be big," he said.

"For the first six months of the company's life we were one of the worst web companies about, but we learned quickly what was needed to survive and grow.

"Sometimes there is nothing like jumping in the deep end and finding out whether you will sink or swim.

"And that's a characteristic of the company: we tend not to look back at our wins and successes. We prefer to look ahead and for what is around the corner and how we can improve.

"We are super critical, perhaps because my brothers are also involved. As senior management we always prefer to have a critical appraisal of the situation and ask why we are not doing better."

It is a philosophy that has evolved into the GForces Trinity: web platform, web management and web marketing – recognition that customers not only need attractive and effective websites, but ones that can be adapted and evolved and also 'sold' to their chosen audience.

"We set out to be something different," he said. "That's always been a USP, that we are much more considered in our approach. There are lots of web companies that will do you a very good web page but fall short on the other things: actually marketing the site and under-

GILES SMITH'S CV

- 1999 – graduates from Bournemouth University with a degree in Leisure Marketing
- 1999 – sets up GForces at his parents' home.
- 2001 – takes offices in College Road, Maidstone
- 2007 – moves company to bespoke offices in Caring Lane, Bearsted.

standing the data that you get out of it and how that drives your decisions."

The approach has landed a string of industry awards, despite the fact that GForces competes in and leads one of the most competitive sectors – the motor trade, with clients including major dealer chains like Lookers and Peter Vardy.

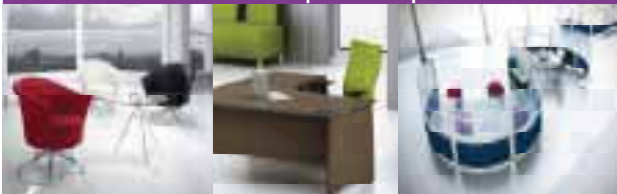
Last year, GForces grew sales 80 per cent, boosted turnover 66 per cent and almost doubled staff to its current 120.

It now holds more than a third of the UK market and Giles, 34, thinks this is close to the ceiling for one firm.

Asked whether this meant diversification into another sector, he says he would rather concentrate on what the company knows well, so its sights are now being trained



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TIGHT-KNIT: Giles Smith says management and staff strive together to come up with and develop fresh ideas

aiming to get Kent IT talent



PASSIONATE: Giles Smith wants to create a train of IT talent for the county's future

on Europe where dealer networks and distributors often have a similar structure to the UK.

It could all have been very different though. After attending Maidstone Grammar School, Giles opted for a degree in leisure marketing because: "I wanted to spend three years down in Bournemouth and that seemed like a very interesting degree; it wasn't, but it was an excuse to enjoy myself."

"But maybe because I'd heard it all before, it inspired me to go and start my own business. My father built and sold two IT companies and made a comfortable living so that was an inspiration."

"When I left university, I did the usual: started looking at jobs in the City and then realised I had no interest in working in London. I'd always wanted to set up a company so I did. It's a lot easier when you have nothing to lose - I was an unemployed graduate living at home."

However, he still recalls getting up 5am to light a stove in order to heat the outbuilding/office given over to the fledgling firm by his family, and it was more than two years before GForces was able to take an office in College Road, Maidstone.

He has forgotten the origins of the company name - he insists, the 'G' didn't come from his christian name.

But the futuristic label and its opposing arrows 'logo' fit perfectly with the hi-tech headquarters the firm had built specially and moved into in 2007 - it will move

into an extension there this year that will double floor space.

However, a lengthy planning delay (see our front page story) means the firm has also taken further space at Maidstone's Turkey Mill office complex, where it runs the Skunkworks - a label used typically in the technology industry for departments where the most cutting-edge thinking and developments go on.

And nurturing and helping to fine tune staff dominated the interview; though he owns a Ferrari as a sign of his success, Giles runs a relatively humble VW Golf as his everyday car.

Start him on the subject of his staff though and he becomes animated and passionate about his goal to create a train of IT talent for Kent. He and his three brothers Tim, 36, Jamie, 32, and Neil, 30, were all born and raised in Maidstone and have since joined him as directors of a local success story.

Giles said they and their company now wanted to encourage others to join that success and are bidding to recruit them young through the GForces Academy, a relationship the company has formed with 15 local schools, colleges and universities.

"Our belief is that if you open the eyes of somebody young while they are making their decisions on A-Levels, maybe even GCSEs, and just show them that you don't have to be a graphic designer to work in the internet - you can be a social media guru, for instance, knowing how to use Facebook and things like that."

"On delivery of a large scale auto project you will usually look at about 15 different skill sets interacting on the same project."

"We also wanted to show local people you don't have to go to London - there are companies like us locally."

He also highlighted how the IT talents in potential recruits were showing up earlier: "Sixteen-year-olds have a greater insight into social networking because that's what they do every day, and they will use every other device other than a laptop."

"The ideas they have are fantastic and one motto we have here is 'never say never'. Younger people bring fresh ideas to the table and keep us on our toes and ensure the survival of the company for the future."

Giles is married with a baby son and lives close to the office in Bearsted - in his spare time, he enjoys as much time as possible with his family.



HIGH-TECH: GForces' modern headquarters in Bearsted, Maidstone

GILES' TOP TIPS

- Integrity is everything - "It's almost a lost value these days. We want our staff to be honest and upfront with customers. We don't want lies and deceit. You can't build a relationship on that."
- Employ for the person not the job - "We have had senior management join us and been unable to give them a title or definitive position; we've brought them on because we know they will naturally find their area."
- Keep asking questions about your business - "My decision to go for the internet was driven by no more than asking myself 'What is the next big thing in technology?'"
- Make work experience work for your business - "When people come for work experience here, they don't get told to sort out a filing cabinet. They will get in front of a customer - maybe not in a speaking role - and be exposed to meetings and decisions and expected to contribute. There is no point trying to attract someone to our business by asking them to make the tea."

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The Bridge 'eat and sleep' deal

WHITBREAD has bought 1.5 acres from Dartford Borough Council and developer ProLogis.

The site at The Bridge will be used for a 61-bed Premier Inn and Beefeater Grill restaurant, subject to a planning application already submitted to Dartford Borough Council.

It is hoped work will start soon on the development close to Junction 1a of the M25 – completion is expected to create 60 jobs.

It also seen as building momentum for The Bridge development, with Whitbread spokesman Derek Griffin, saying: "We're investing here because we believe it will be good for our customers and good for our business."



MAIDEN VOYAGE: P&O chief executive Helen Deeble says the Spirit of Britain will revolutionise ferry travel and offers a leap forward in quality of build and the service the company will be able to offer



Super ferry's debut

SPIRIT of Britain – the biggest ferry ever seen on the Dover Straits – has made its maiden voyage across the Channel to Calais.

The P&O Ferries vessel, which has a capacity for 2,000 passengers and four kilometres of traffic parked end to end, marks a revolution in ferry travel with a new design aimed at enhancing fuel economy, keeping running costs down and boosting the company's environmental credentials.

Costing 180 million – around £152 million – the Finnish-built ferry includes convenient parking, with a private car deck for motorists accessing the ship, and a wide choice of dining and lounges with entertainment for children.

The ship will be officially named by Kent Olympics star Dame Kelly Holmes at the end of March and be joined on the Dover-Calais service by a sister ship, Spirit of France, in September.

P&O Ferries chief executive, Helen Deeble,

said: "We are delighted to welcome this fantastic new ship to Dover ready to start service later this month.

"She offers a leap forward in terms of her size and the quality of the build and I'm confident that she'll provide a fantastic experience for all of the customers who will travel on her in the years to come."

Spirit of Britain will sail five times every 24 hours, with standard return ticket prices starting at £39 each way for a car and up to nine passengers travelling throughout 2011.



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Online holiday expert wins again

HOLIDAY Extras – the Hythe-based market leader in travel add-ons – has been named Best Insurance Provider for the third year running at the Travel Weekly Globe Awards.

It also picked up a further trophy at the London event, presented by comedian Jimmy Carr.

Head of partnerships at Holiday Extras, Andrea Clayton (pictured) said: "We are thrilled to have won best travel insurance provider, as

voted by the travel trade, for the third year running, and also best add-ons for the eighth year."

This latest award follows a run of success for Holiday Extras.

The company was short-listed for the National Business Awards Blackberry Award for Customer Focus in 2010, and won Best Customer Service and Commitment in the Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEIBA) in 2010.



THRILLED: Andrea Clayton with Holiday Extra's globes

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Now's the time to export



By **JO JAMES**
Chief Executive of Kent Invicta
Chamber of Commerce

ONE of the key factors in the economic recovery of UK is going to be the export market.

While the domestic market is important, there is little doubt cutbacks on Britain's domestic expenditure, future growth of the home market will be slow. Doubtless the same may well apply to overseas markets, but this market has the advantage of being much bigger. To cope with any sluggishness in the home market, companies may need to exploit the potential of a much wider area.

And exporting is not just a matter of products. Skills, services, innovation, even knowledge, are all exportable and it can be a two-way street; close connection with, and experience of, overseas markets can feed back into the efficiency and productivity of the company concerned.

Potential

Recent research suggests that Kent is not an over-enthusiastic exporter, with eight per cent of businesses regularly exporting, compared with a regional average of 10 per cent. This is despite the fact that the level of occasional exporters in the county stands at 24 per cent, the second highest in the region, and 28 per cent of Kent firms have received overseas enquiries, the highest in the region.

So there is plenty of potential already waiting to be exploited.

However, exporting is not necessarily simple and straightforward: there are inevitably rules and regulations, which vary from country to country and region to region; the need to establish the best market for any particular product or service; and a lot of documentation needed to comply with export certification requirements.

Which is where Kent Invicta Chamber can help.

Following the winding up of the Thames Gateway Chamber of Commerce, as reported in Business Week last week, Kent Invicta – the county's biggest chamber has expanded its export offices. The chamber, which already included the Canterbury, Ashford and Maidstone areas, intends to extend its export lifeline with two more staff in order to bridge the gap left by its neighbour. Chief executive Jo James said: "We felt it was important to step up to the plate at a time when Kent business is being urged to export and, indeed, is actually better placed geographically to export to its neighbours across the Channel than it is to sell to destinations within the UK."



DELIVERING THE GOODS: The export industry is vital to the financial recovery in the UK

The Chamber has a Business Support Service with qualified business advisers who can introduce you to the exporting process, and works in close liaison with several other business support organisations – British Chambers of Commerce, UKTI, Business Link, Enterprise Europe Network, for instance – to guide you through the various stages with minimum hassle.

When it comes to the actual exporting, the

Chamber runs a full Certification Service, providing information, advice and guidance on the necessary documentation from start to finish.

So exporting can open up a huge new market for your product or service, and it may be easier than you think, but there are many other considerations. Exporting needs commitment, planning and strategy. Here are a few points to consider:

MARKETS: Where are the best ones for your purpose, and how do you access them?

RESOURCES: Does the business have the financial resources, people and management capability to deal successfully with other cultures and does your product and service need modification or different approvals to be sold overseas?

EXPERIENCE: Do you know how to negotiate contracts with overseas customers, distributors and agents, and have you managed growth projects before?

CONTROLS: Is your administration set up to cope with extended transport lines and new currencies and can your product and service quality prevent expensive recalls and reworking?

IDEAS: Can you test or pilot this leap into export, managing the project through to a conclusion and dealing innovatively with problems arising?

LEADERSHIP: Is everyone with you on this – the staff and directors – and can you define milestones to demonstrate progress, manage expectations and keep people motivated?

If you are considering exporting, Kent Invicta Chamber can help you formulate a strategy and prepare a plan. If you already export, the Chamber has the resources and services to help you expand your markets, and a full certification service for your export documentation.

Contact us on 01233 503838, or email exports@kentinvictachamber.co.uk for further information.

Export documentation explained

ONCE you have established the right product and market place, you need to deliver your goods on time and ensure that you receive your payment quickly.

This can be a simple process when you know how, but understanding which document is required for each shipment to each destination can be overwhelming.

What should be a very simple process can be time-consuming and costly; accurate completion and authentication of export documentation is vital.

The Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce can make the whole process as straightforward as possible and ensure that your goods travel with ease, providing you with peace of mind.

The Chamber provides a wide range of documentation services and guidance on trade procedures to businesses of all sectors and sizes. There are a range of documents required when exporting your goods.

These include:

EC CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

A certificate needed to meet overseas customs requirements to qualify for (normally) zero import duty as part of International Trade agreements. Sometimes also needed to comply with

banking requirements when trade is conducted under Letters of Credit.

ARAB-BRITISH CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN

Similar to the above but used for exports to the Arab League States.

EUR 1

Customs Movement Certificate issued in the country of export to enable claims for preferential import duty levels on goods being exported to EC preferential partner countries.

A.TR

Customs Movement Certificate for goods in EC free circulation (i.e. duty paid) being exported to Turkey. A.TR allows import into Turkey without payment of customs duty.

LEGISLATION

Some markets require documentation to be legalised. This can be arranged by the Chamber via the Consular section of the relevant Embassy or through the Foreign Office.

ONLINE CAPABILITY

Exporters undertake much of their export activ-

ity online, from researching markets, assessing competition and exchange rate advice to processing export documents online.

Kent Invicta Chamber provides an online documentation service allowing exporters to apply for and receive their documentation electronically.

This includes EC Certificates of Origin, Arab Certificates of Origin, EUR1s and A.TRs.

Businesses are now taking advantage of the online service and finding that the turnaround time for obtaining export documentation has been significantly reduced.

Business benefits of using online services:

SPEED

By forwarding your export documentation to Kent Invicta Chamber electronically, you could have them checked, certified and returned to you for printing within minutes. Thus allowing your business to save valuable time and money, and ensure your goods reach their destination on time.

SERVICE

A faster service means you can offer a better service to your customers; and, of course,



because the whole process is electronic, you can free up staff normally used for delivery and collection of export documents.

SIMPLICITY

Forwarding and receiving documents electronically and printing them off at your own premises is effortless, quick and easy.

NEXT WEEK: Business Week Spotlight will focus on Investment & Funding



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Sunday 20th March

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